

epidemic was worst, the census was taken in the day time instead of at night. But it cannot be contended that the enumeration was as accurate as it would otherwise have been, and it is inevitable that some of the people who were absent from their own houses must have been left out of account.

After allowing for the loss due to the absence of a great part of the foreign-born population, there is still a net decrease of 95,373 to be accounted for. For this, it would seem, the plague is mainly to blame. The total reported mortality from plague was less than 35,000, but it is probable that at least half the plague deaths escaped notice; even so, it must apparently be admitted that some 25,000 persons were omitted from the census returns. The effect of the epidemic is very clearly shown in the returns for different parts of the district. The loss of population was greatest, with two exceptions, in the thānas on the banks of the Ganges or Son, where the plague epidemic was most virulent, the greatest falling off being in Mālsālāmi, Fatwā and Mokāmeh. The only inland thānas where there was a marked decline are Masaurhi and Chāndi, while the south of the district, which suffered least from plague, almost held its ground; excluding the Chāndi thāna, the Bihār subdivision actually showed a slight increase. These variations follow very closely the course of the epidemic.

Even, however, if we allow for the disturbing influence of the plague, for the number of deaths and desertions due to it, and for the thousands who were omitted from the returns, the fact remains that the population of the present district area is not progressive. Twenty-five years ago the agricultural population, it is said, had apparently already reached the limit which the land could support, and even in 1891 the increase recorded was purely nominal. There seems little doubt that the tendency is to a diminished rate of reproduction, and the proportion of children is slowly, but steadily, falling.

The salient statistics of the census of 1901 are reproduced below :—

SUBDIVISION.	Area in square miles.	NUMBER OF—		Population.	Population per square mile.	Percentage of variation in population between 1891 and 1901.
		Towns.	Village.			
Bankipore ...	334	2	975	341,054	1,021	— 13.7
Dinapore ...	424	2	791	315,697	745	— 11.4
Barh ...	526	2	1,075	365,327	695	— 10.5
Bihar ...	791	1	2,111	602,907	762	— 0.9
DISTRICT TOTAL	3,075	7	4,952	1,624,985	783	— 8.4

Patna has a larger cultivable area than the other districts of South Bihār, and contains altogether 783 persons to the square mile, but if its two large towns are excluded, it supports less than 700 persons to the square mile. The density of population is greatest in the thickly peopled urban and semi-urban country on the banks of the Ganges, and further inland the population becomes more scanty. There is, consequently, considerable variation in the density of the population in different parts of the district. In Dinapore thāna there is the enormous number of 2,599 persons to the square mile, and Phulwāri support 956 persons to the square mile. In no thāna does the density fall below 550 per square mile, and it is least in the southern thānas of Silāo (587), Bikram (582) and Masaurhi (566), all purely agricultural thānas.

GENERAL
CHARAC-
TERIS-
TICS.

Density
of popula-
tion.

The statistics of migration at the census of 1901 were seriously affected by the plague, as many whose permanent homes were in other districts fled to escape its ravages; and the result was that only 82,440 immigrants were recorded as against 135,492 in 1891, the decrease being 53,052 or 36 per cent. On the other hand, the number of emigrants, i.e., of natives of Patna, who were residing in other districts at the time of the census, was almost the same as in 1891, aggregating 142,316. The volume of emigration is particularly large, the number of emigrants being nearly equal to one-twentieth of the whole population. They are especially numerous in Calcutta, where more than 30,000 natives of the district were enumerated in 1901. The majority, however, are only temporary absentees, two-thirds being males who leave their wives and families at home and return at intervals with their accumulated savings. There is a considerable ebb and flow of population across the boundary line which divides Patna from the adjoining districts, but the number of immigrants from distant places is small.

Migration.

As in other Bihār districts, there is an excess of females over males, there being 1,020 females to every 1,000 males. This disproportion is very marked in the case of some of the low castes, possibly owing to the fact that a large number of the males are temporary absentees in Calcutta and elsewhere. On the

Propor-
tion of
sexes.

	Males.	Females.
Bābhan	58,590	54,665
Brāhman	29,109	18,749
Rājput	33,707	20,360
Chamāra	27,184	28,838
Kabār	29,198	45,274
Teli	25,154	26,260

other hand, it is noticeable that the opposite is the case with some of the high castes, and the marginal table will show the contrast between certain of the lower and higher castes in this respect.

The proportion of the population living in urban areas is unusually large owing to the fact that the district includes the great

Towns and
villages.

city of Patna. At the census of 1901 altogether 251,113 persons or 15 per cent. of the total number of inhabitants were found residing in urban areas, viz., in Patna, Bârh, Bihâr, Dinapore, Khagaul, Mokâmeh and Phulwâri; and of these 7 towns Patna alone accounted for 134,785 or more than half the total number.

- The latter figure disclosed a decrease of 18 per cent. since 1891, but owing to the large number of persons who had died or had left Patna during the plague epidemic, this census failed to give a true indication of the normal population of the city. Accordingly, a fresh enumeration was effected at the end of July 1901, when the plague panic had passed away and the people had settled down; and at this enumeration the population was recorded as 163,739 or 7 per cent. less than in 1891. This decrease is largely due, among other causes, to the declining prosperity of the city caused by the gradual decay of its river-borne trade. Of the other towns, Bârh appears to be stationary, in Bihâr there was a slight decline, and in Dinapore the population was nearly 32 per cent. less than in 1891, a decrease due to the plague epidemic.

It will be noticed that with the exception of Bihâr, all these 7 towns are situated on or near the Ganges, which has been the great line of traffic from the earliest times. The towns on its banks have consequently always had a good trade and attracted settlers; and even though the railway has supplanted the river as the chief artery of commerce, they have not suffered so much as would otherwise be the case, as they are all situated on the line of rail. Bihâr, which is the only town in the interior of the district, has for a long time been decadent, its former trade in silk and cotton cloths and muslins having been killed by European competition; but now that it is connected by a light railway with the East Indian Railway system, there seem prospects of its ancient prosperity reviving.

The number of persons residing in rural areas is 1,373,872 or 85 per cent. of the total population. There are altogether 4,952 villages, and there is thus approximately 1 village to every two-fifths of a square mile. The average number of inhabitants per village, which is only 277, is less than in any other district in Bihâr except in Gayâ. The majority of the rural population congregate in small villages; 36 per cent. reside in villages of 500 to 2,000 inhabitants, and 61 per cent. in villages with less than 500 inhabitants; only 3 per cent. of the rural population live in villages of over 2,000 inhabitants. In the 30 years ending in 1901 the density of the population in the villages rose from 659 to 694 per square mile, while it fell by over 300 per square mile in the typical towns of Patna and Bihâr, and it would thus

appear that there is a tendency for the village population to increase while that of the towns declines.

The chief village officials belong to the establishment maintained by the landlords for collecting their dues from the villagers; and in most villages may be seen the *kachahri*, where the rents are collected and local business transacted. The head of this establishment is the landlord's agent or *gumāshta*, whose duty is to collect the rents and generally look after the interests of the *malik*. His position naturally makes him one of the most important functionaries in the village community; and though he receives only a nominal pay, with perhaps a small percentage on the landlord's receipts, his perquisites enable him to live in considerable comfort. Next in rank comes the *patwari* or village accountant, who with the *gumāshta* enjoys remarkable facilities for filling his pockets at the expense both of the landlord, whom he can cheat with cooked accounts, and of the cultivator, who must pay for a fair assessment of his crops. The *gumāshta* has one or two paid assistants called *barāhils*, who act as his lieutenants and help in collecting the rents. In each village there is also the *gorait*, a messenger who acts under the orders of the *gumāshta*; he is generally paid no salary like the *barāhil*, but receives instead a small portion of land, which he is allowed to cultivate rent-free. Where the rent of land is settled by estimating the outturn of the crop, the landowner's establishment contains also an *āmin*, or chief surveyor, a clerk (*navisinda*), an arbitrator (*sālis*), and a chainman (*jaribkash*), who measures the fields with a rod.

The other officials, who are independent of the *malik*, are the *jeth-raiyat* or village headman; the Brāhman priest, who gets a percentage of the produce at every harvest; the *sonār* or goldsmith and the *teli* or oilman, who are generally employed as *dandidars* or weighmen; the *hajjām* or barber, the carpenter, the blacksmith, the washerman, the tanner, and the tanner's wife, who holds the office of village midwife. These officials are all paid annually at rates which vary with the state of the season, and the wealth of the cultivator. Besides these, there is the village *chaukidār*, or watchman in the service of Government.

The dress of the people does not differ in any important respect from the costumes worn in the adjoining districts of Gayā and Shāhābād. The better class of Hindus ordinarily wear a piece of cloth (*dhoti*) fastened round the loins and falling to the knee; and over this a long robe (*chapkan*) fastened on the right shoulder. On the head is placed a light skull-cap (*topi*), and the feet are encased in loose country-made shoes, with the toes curled upwards; sometimes, also, a white scarf (*chadar*) is thrown over the shoulders.

The material of the dress differs with the weather. In the hot weather, the robe and cap will be of muslin or some light cloth; but in the cold season, English cloth is used for the robe, and the cap is made of velvet or some other warm material. A Muhammadan wears, instead of a *dhoti*, long drawers (*pāijāmā*) extending to the ankle, which are often loose, but sometimes very tight, and his robe is buttoned on the left shoulder; but in other respects, his dress resembles that of the Hindu.

On state occasions, Hindus and Muhammadans dress alike. The head-dress now consists of a flat turban (*pagri*), or of one twisted round the head (*murethā*). Loose drawers take the place of the *dhoti*; and outside, a little above the waist, is twisted a long piece of cloth (*kamarband*). Over the *chapkan* will be worn a looser robe (*kabā*), which is fastened so as to allow the *chapkan* to appear above the chest; and on the feet, shoes of English shape often take the place of the country slipper. The *kamarband* is frequently dispensed with; and in that case a loose open robe (*chogā*), reaching nearly to the feet, succeeds the *kabā*, or sometimes a shorter but tighter coat, called an *ebā*. A Hindu shopkeeper will wear a short jacket (*mirzāi*) instead of *chapkan*, but in other respects his dress, though of cheaper materials, will resemble the one just described.

A cultivator wears only a *dhoti* and a sort of plaid (*gamchhā*), which is thrown sometimes round the body, sometimes over the shoulders, and often on the head with one end hanging down the back. A corner of this cloth is often knotted, and used as a sort of purse for keeping spare cash, receipts, etc. The better class of cultivators wear the cap and shoes, but the majority do without them. Inside the house, the poorer classes never wear shoes, but shop-keepers often use wooden sandals. The richer classes sometimes put on a loose coat (*kurtā*) instead of the *chapkan*, when they are at home. As a protection against the cold, the richer classes wear shawls both when at home and abroad; but the middle classes who cannot afford shawls, envelope themselves in a sort of padded cloak (*dulāi*).

Among Hindu women the most important article of dress is the combined wrapper and veil known as the *sāri*. This is a long piece of cotton or silk which is wrapped round the middle, and contrived so as to fall in graceful folds below the ankle of one leg, while it shows a part of the other. The upper end crosses the breast, and is thrown forward again over the shoulder or over the head like a veil. The bodice (*kurtā*), which fits tight to the shape, and covers but does not conceal the bust, is as indispensable a part of the dress as the outer garment. In some cases, where a shorter

sāri is worn, an undergarment (*lahband*) is used to cover the lower part of the figure; or sometimes, a skirt or petticoat (*lakanga*) is worn instead. Musalman women wear drawers (*pañjama*), which may be either loose or tight, the podice (*kurtā*) and a sheet (*chadar*), which is put on in the same way as the Hindu *sāri*.

The houses are divided, in almost all cases, into two principal divisions; one for males, and the other for females. A rich native has generally two courtyards (*angan*), each surrounded by verandahs, from which doors lead into the various rooms. The front door leads into the outer courtyard, on the left of which is a hall for the reception of guests, and on the right are two or three rooms, which are generally used as bedrooms for the males. Beyond this courtyard is another, surrounded by the female apartments. On one side are bedrooms; and on the other the kitchen, store-house, and a latrine for females. There is also a sitting-room for the ladies of the household. The houses of the middle classes are smaller; but are constructed on much the same plan. The female division will only contain three or four rooms, besides the kitchen and store-room; one for the owner and his wife; another for the eldest son, if married; and the rest for unmarried girls and maid servants.

Little or no attention is paid to ventilation, even in the better class of houses. All the rooms are jealously closed; and the windows, if there are any, are raised much above the height of a man, and are so small that scarcely any light can penetrate into the room. Among the poorer classes there will be only one room for all the females, and an outer verandah or shed for the reception of visitors. The kitchen is always attached to the female room; and when the family is very poor, the same room has to serve for both cooking and sleeping in. Where houses are built with two or more stories, the ground floor is used for kitchen, store-rooms, etc.; while the other stories are divided into bedrooms and sitting-rooms.

As regards furniture, a cultivator has none but the barest necessities—a few earthen cooking utensils, and receptacles for water, some pots and jars for keeping his oil, salt, grain, etc.; a small oven (*taud*) for baking bread; a few brass utensils for eating and washing purposes; a light stone mill (*chakri*) for splitting grain; and a heavy one (*jantā*) for grinding flour; two stones, one flat (*sil*) and the other like a roller (*lorhā*), for grinding spices; a wooden mortar (*okhālī*) and pestle (*mūsal*); one or two small bamboo receptacles (*petārā*); mats made of palm leaves (*chataī*); a rough bed (*khatīā* or *chārpai*) constructed of coarse string with a bamboo or wooden framework; and one or two cocoanut shell

pipes (*nārikel*) for smoking. He has no chests or other receptacles for keeping ornaments or cash, which are commonly kept concealed under ground in the floor of his house, or in a jar or other utensil containing grain or the like. Grain is, however, generally stored in a circular receptacle (*kotli*), with mud sides and a mud cover. There is usually a recess made in one of the walls, which is kept sacred for the household god; but the god himself is often unrepresented, except by a mark of red paint.

Food.

Rice, which is the staple food of the people in Bengal, is not the staple food of the poor in the Patna district, but rather that of the fairly well-to-do. The mass of the people live on bannocks made of flour prepared from wheat or one of the many kinds of coarse grains and pulses. These cakes are accompanied by vegetable, salt and a few simple condiments; and the meal is varied by a porridge of the same. Maize is eaten whenever it can be procured, and also *arhar* (*Cajanus indicus*) either in the form of flour or as a thick pottage. *Maruā* (*Eleusine Coracana*) is consumed largely in the Bihār subdivision, and besides this many kinds of millets and pulses form part of the cultivator's dietary. Among the poorer classes the morning meal usually consists of parched or boiled grains of various sorts, and the evening meal of boiled rice (*bhāt*) with *dāl* or pulse and occasionally vegetable curries.

Language.

The vernacular current over the whole district is the dialect of Bihāri Hindi known as Magahī or Magadhi. Magahī is properly speaking the language of the country of Magadha, which roughly corresponded to what is at the present day the district of Patna and the northern half of Gayā, but the language is not confined to this area. It is also spoken all over the rest of Gayā and over the district of Hazārībāgh; on the west it extends to a portion of Palāmau, and on the east to portions of the districts of Monghyr and Bhāgalpur. Over the whole of this area it is one and the same dialect, with hardly any local variations. The dialect of this district is practically the same as that of Gayā but not so pure, being infected on the one hand by the Maithilī spoken north of the Ganges, and on the other hand by the strong Muhammadan element of the city, from which it has borrowed several Urdū idioms.

Magahi.

Magahī is condemned by speakers of other Indian languages as being as rude and uncouth as the people who use it. Like Maithilī, it has a complex system of verbal conjugation, and the principal difference between the two dialects is that Maithilī has been under the influence of learned Brāhmins for centuries,

while Magahi is the language of a people who have been dubbed boors since Vedic times. To a native of India, one of its most objectionable features is its habit of winding up every question, even when addressed to a person held in respect, with the word 'ra.' In other parts of India this word is only used in addressing an inferior, or when speaking contemptuously. Hence a man of Magah has the reputation of rudeness, and his liability to get an undeserved beating on that score has been commemorated in a popular song. Magahi has no indigenous literature, but there are many popular songs current throughout the area in which the language is spoken, and strolling bards recite various long epic poems, such as the song of Lorik, the cow-herd hero, and the song of Gopichandra, which are known more or less over the whole of Northern India. The character in general use in writing is the Kaithi, but the Devanāgarī is also used by the educated classes. The number of people speaking Magahi in this district is returned at 1,551,000 or 95 per cent. of the population.*

Urdū is spoken, and the Persian character used, in a more or less correct form, by the Muhammadan population of the towns, but in the interior both Musalmāns and Kāyasths use the Awadhī dialect of Eastern Hindi, *i.e.*, literally the language of Oudh. This dialect is also used as a sort of language of politeness, especially when Europeans are addressed, by the rustics, who have picked it up from their Musalmān friends and imagine it to be Hindustāni of polite society. The Devanāgarī and the Kaithi characters are both used in writing Awadhī; and the Persian character is also occasionally used by the educated classes.

Bengali is spoken by the Bengalis settled in Patna and Bankipore; they are chiefly clerks, officials and shopkeepers. Marwāri is the language of a considerable number of Marwāri cloth merchants, who carry on a good trade in Patna city, especially in the commercial quarter of Chauk Kalān. Altogether 7,981 persons were returned at the last census as able to read and write English; over 5,000 of these were residents of Patna, Bankipore and Dinapore.

Dr. Grierson points out that the three great dialects of Bihārī Hindi fall naturally into two groups, viz., Maithili and Magahi on the one hand and Bhojpuri on the other, and that the speakers are also separated by ethnic differences. Magahi and Maithili are the dialects of nationalities which have carried conservatism to the excess of uncouthness, while Bhojpuri is the practical language of

* The sketch of Magahi is condensed from the account given in Dr. Grierson's Linguistic Survey of India, Vol. V.

an energetic race. "Magadha," he says, "though it is intimately connected with the early history of Buddhism, was far too long a cockpit for contending Musalmān armies, and too long subject to the headquarters of a Musalmān province to remember its former glories of the Hindu age. A great part of it is wild, barren and sparsely cultivated, and over much of the remainder cultivation is only carried on with difficulty by the aid of great irrigation works widely spread over the country, and dating from prehistoric times. Its peasantry, oppressed for centuries, and even now, under British rule, poorer than that of any other neighbouring part of India, is uneducated and unenterprising. There is an expressive word current in Eastern Hindustān which illustrates the national character. It is '*bhades*' and it has two meanings. One is 'uncouth, boorish,' and the other is 'an inhabitant of Magadha.' Which meaning is the original, and which the derivative I do not know; but a whole history is contained in these two syllables."

RELIGIONS.

Altogether 1,435,637 persons or 88·3 per cent. of the total population are Hindus, and 186,411 or 11·5 per cent. are Muhammadans. The latter are therefore a comparatively small minority, but the proportion is greater than in any other district in South Bihār, and most of the leading families in the district, and especially in Patna city, are Muhammadan. Christians number 2,562, of whom 139 are natives; and there are also a few Jains and Sikhs. A fuller description of the religions of the district will be given in the next Chapter.

PRINCIPAL CASTES.

Among the Muhammadan Sheikhs (67,000) and Jolāhās (39,000) are most strongly represented; and the most numerous Hindu castes are Ahīrs or Goālās (220,000), Kurmīs (181,000), Bābhāns (114,000), Dosādhs (96,000), Kahārs (85,000), Koirīs (80,000), Rājputs (64,000), Chamārs (56,000) and Telīs (52,000). There are also 8 castes with a strength of over 25,000, viz., Barhīs, Brāhmāns, Dhānuks, Hajjāms, Kāndus, Musahārs, Pāsīs and Kayasths.

GOĀLĀS.

The Goālās (220,000), or Ahīrs, as they are also called, are the most numerous caste in the district. They are a thrifty race, selling their grain and husks, living themselves on coarse food, and cutting grass for their cattle, while their women go about selling milk, butter and *ghi*. They are generally cultivators and cattle-breeders; but many of the poorer are labourers, and a few rich zamīndārs are also members of the caste. They are notoriously the most quarrelsome caste in the district, constantly concerned in riots, and very fond of the *lathi*; cattle trespass forms a frequent subject of dispute among them. They have the

reputation of being audacious cattle stealers, and many at the bottom of the social scale are professional thieves.

On the 16th Kārtik, the day after the Dewālī, they observe a curious festival called Gaidārā or Sohrai. On the Dewālī night rice is boiled in all the milk left in the house, and the mixture, called *khar*, is then offered to Basāwan. All the cattle are left without food, and next morning their horns are painted red, and red spots are daubed on their bodies. They are then turned into a field in which is a pig with its feet tied together, and are driven over the wretched animal until it has been trampled or gored to death.

The Kurmis (181,000) are next to Goālās the largest caste. They are almost entirely employed in cultivation, but many of the poorer are labourers. Some take service as *khidmatgārs*, a few are zamīndārs and *thikādārs*, and in the towns many are money-lenders. As cultivators, they confine themselves to the staple crops as a rule, and do not breed cattle. They are fond of petty litigation and are always engaging in disputes about the possession of crops and land.

Their religious observances are a curious mixture. The orthodox Hanumān and Kālī are favourite deities, but they also worship the Muhammadan Pānch Pīr, the officiating priest being a Dafālī, and they propitiate a number of evil spirits and godlings, such as Goraiyā. One of these, Rām Thākur, is appeased by the sacrifice of a goat, which is cooked and eaten by the family; any flesh left over is carefully buried, for if a particle is not buried and rots, Rām Thākur is enraged and then woe betide his careless worshippers. In cases of illness exorcism is regularly practised, *qjhd's* or wizard being called in to expel the spirits possessing a man, which are supposed to be cast out by the superior strength of the *qjhd's* familiar spirit; when cast out they are imprisoned in a small bamboo tube or earthen pot, which is burnt or buried. The Churnail, or disembodied spirit of a woman who has died in child-birth, is particularly feared. To pacify her, needles are driven into the ground; and when a woman dies in child-birth, her feet are pierced with needles, and sand and *urid* seed thrown on her body to prevent her haunting her family. One spirit, called Bandī Māi, furnishes an exception to the general rule, in that she is regarded as benevolent; and curiously enough, the Kurmis also worship Kartā, a spirit with no image or visible representation and bearing a name which seems to show that he is intended to represent the creator of the universe.

The Bābhās (114,000) constitute the greater portion of the zamīndārs, agricultural *thikādārs*, and well-to-do cultivators of

this district. As a class, they are very quarrelsome and litigious, and are generally credited with being deceitful and untrustworthy. The general estimation in which their character is held is expressed by 3 local proverbs—“The straightest Bābhan is as crooked as a sickle.” “Even if a Bābhan swear in the middle of the Ganges by a sacred idol, his son's head and the Śāstras, he cannot be trusted;” “Bābhans, dogs and elephants are always fighting among themselves.” They claim to be descended from Brāhmanas; like Brāhmanas will not hold the plough, but employ labourers for the purpose; and some have Brahmanical names, such as Pānde, Misr and Tewāri. Local tradition has it that they are descended from a number of persons collected by the Diwān of Jarāsandha, king of Magadha, at a feast given by his master. Jarāsandha had ordered him to secure the attendance of 100,000 Brāhmanas, but he could not find so many and was driven to bring in a number of men of other castes whom he invested with the sacred thread and palmed off as genuine Brāhmanas.

This legend was probably invented to explain the claim of the Bābhans to be Brāhmanas. They now constitute a separate caste, and their degradation probably dates back to the time when Buddhism was overthrown. It has been pointed out that Bābhan is merely the Pāli form of Brāhman, and that the word is often found in Asoka's edicts. It has therefore been conjectured that those now known as Bābhans remained Buddhists after the Brāhmanas around them had reverted to Hinduism, and so the Pāli name continued to be applied them; while the synonym Bhuinhār or Bhumihāraka is explained as referring to their having seized the lands attached to the old Buddhist monasteries. This theory is borne out by the Brahmanical titles which are used along with the Rājput titles of Singh, Rai and Thākur, and by the fact that in this Province they are practically confined to the area covered the ancient kingdom of Magadha, which long remained the centre of Buddhism.

The chief deities worshipped by them are Hanuṃtān, Sītālā, Sokhā, Sambhunāth, Bandī and the Grām Devatā. Goraiyā is the form generally taken by the latter, the place of worship being a clay mound below some tree outside the village. Here offerings are made periodically on certain days in Āśvīn, Phāgun and Chait, and also on special occasions, such as at marriages or on the birth of a child; the Bābhans' offerings, such as goats, sweetmeats, milk and *ghī*, are taken by *Īśāsās*. Evil spirits are propitiated, especially Churail and Brahm Pīsāch, the latter being supposed to set fire to houses.

The Dosādhs (96,000) are a low caste, who work as cultivators and practically monopolize the duties of road and village watchmen, *goraits* and *chaukidars*. Those who cannot find such employment and have no land, work as general labourers, ploughmen, etc.; some of the cooks employed by Europeans are Dosādhs. They have the reputation of being inveterate thieves; but if one of them is paid a sufficient amount to act as *chaukidar*, his confrères usually abstain from plundering the houses under his charge. They are, as a rule, of a low type, and appear to have traces of an aboriginal descent. The main features of their worship are the sacrifice of pigs and libations of liquor, and their ceremonies generally terminate in a drunken orgy and a feast on swine's flesh.

The gods mostly affected by them are Rāhu, Salais, Sokhā and Gorsaiyā. The worship of Rāhu takes place twice every year on Pus Sankrānti day and on Chait Satnaraini day, and is held with great ceremony on the occasion of a marriage. Two bamboo posts are erected with two swords placed edge upwards across them, thus forming a small ladder. The Dosādh, who officiates, and is called the Bhagat, stands on the rungs formed by the swords, chanting some incantations and holding 2 canes bent in the form of a bow, while some balls of flour are boiled in milk close by; these, when ready, are offered to Rāhu. The next ceremony consists of 3 persons walking over the red-hot embers of a fire burnt in a shallow pit, viz., a Brāhman, the Bhagat, and the man on whose behalf the ceremony takes place; when they have walked over the burning charcoal, sterile women snatch away small pieces of it, in the belief that this will bring them children.

The Kahārs (85,000) are cultivators and are also largely employed as *pālki*-bearers and general labourers. A large number of them are personal servants, a capacity in which they are extremely useful. Like other low castes, they worship Bandi, Sokhā, Rām Thākur, Pānch Pīr and Mānusa Deva. The deity last named, which is the deified spirit of a dead man, is propitiated with offerings of goats when a marriage takes place. Kahārs.

One custom peculiar to this caste is the worship of wolves. This worship is based on a tradition that a wolf once carried off a Kahār boy, was pursued by his relatives, and induced to give him up. Since then, it is said, wolves have been worshipped by the Kahārs. On the occasion of a birth or marriage, the Kahārs hold a feast, and before anything is eaten, some of the food is set aside in a dish and placed in the court-yard. When the feast is over, it is thrown away, and this is regarded as an offering to the wolves. Another legend connects the Kahārs, like the Bābhans, with

Jarāsandha, and makes them the builders of the great embankment called Asurēbāndh near Giriak. This legend is given in Chapter XVI in the article on Giriak; and it will suffice here to say that, after the Kahārs had failed in their task, Jarāsandha ordered them to be brought, that he might give them their wages, for though, he said, they had been unsuccessful in winning his daughter and half his kingdom, they had nevertheless laboured hard and were deserving of some consideration. He gave each man $3\frac{1}{2}$ seers of *anāj* (food-grain), and ever since that period $3\frac{1}{2}$ seers of *anāj* have been the Kahār's legitimate wage for a day's work.

The Koiris (80,000) are industrious, peaceful and contented cultivators, in great demand among zamindārs, who are always glad to settle lands with them. In addition to the staple crops, the Koiris largely cultivate potatoes and country vegetables, and are the chief cultivators of poppy, being the only caste whose patience inclines them to this work. In cultivation, however, they are not so niggardly as the Goālā; they live on better grain and give the husks to their cattle; they also do not breed cattle or sell milk, butter, etc., nor do they steal. A few of them are merchants in the town—a vocation in which their industry usually renders them successful.

Rājputs.

The Rājputs (64,000), who are the descendants of Rajput soldiers who settled at an early period in the district, are chiefly well-to-do cultivators and agricultural *thikadārs*; some are zamindārs and money-lenders. There is considerable class feeling among them: several villages are composed entirely of Rājputs, even down to the *chaukidār*. Many of them consider themselves superior to the Bābhans, whose claims to Brahmanical origin are not always admitted. They have a reputation for greater bravery and honesty than the average Bihāri, and are largely employed in the police.

Chamārs.

The Chamārs (56,000) work as tanners and labourers, and hold a very low position, as they are continually defiled by contact with dead bullocks, etc., to the hides of which they have a recognized right. They are not without reason frequently suspected of poisoning cattle in order to obtain the hides. They supply the villagers with leather thongs for their whips and fastenings for their ploughs, repairing the latter when necessary. They also act as village criers and as musicians at ceremonies; their wives are the village midwives. They get grain and crops from their clients at harvest, and sometimes have small *jāgirs*. Such is their reputation for stealing that the word "*chamāri*" is equivalent to "*chori*," and is generally used by the villagers to mean theft. They are enabled to carry on

their dishonest practices with some impunity, for fear that their wives would refuse their services at child-birth.

The Telis (52,000) have a monopoly of making and selling oil, this being the traditional occupation of the caste. A large proportion, however, are grain merchants, and many combine money-lending with their trade. The Telis have a firm belief in evil spirits, and every Teli, whether he dies a natural or unnatural death, is believed to become a very powerful and malignant spirit called Musan; it requires, it is said, a very expert *ojha* and the strongest spells to cast out a Musan from a possessed person. Jugglers often use the skull of a Teli as a symbol of their art, and thereby invoke the aid of Musan.

The Telis were formerly a very powerful clan in Bihār, and Telārha, or as it was formerly called Tailādhaka, is said to have been a centre of their power. The great doorway at the Buddhist monastery of Nālanda (Bargāon) was set up by one Balāditya, "chief among the wise men of the Tailādhaka clan;" it was a Teli who set up the colossal image of Buddha there, which is known as the Teliā Bhandār, and another set up a great Buddhist statue at Tetrāwān. Nearly the whole trade of the district is in their hands, and a popular saying is "*Turk, Teli, tār, in tinon Bihār,*" i.e., Bihār is made up of Muhammadans, Telis and toddy-palms.

The Brāhman, with a strength of 38,849, appear to be a Brāh. declining caste, the number of males falling from 24,911 in 1881 to 22,296 in 1891 and to 20,100 in 1901. This decrease is probably due largely to the spread of English education, which has lessened the hold of the priests on the people; the greater number have little or no means; many are beggars and are now often turned away from door to door. As a caste, they were till quite lately averse to the study of English and thus deprived themselves of the clerical employment for which many are intellectually fitted. The most numerous divisions of Brāhman in this district are the Sākadwipi and the Kānyakubja. Among the Sākadwipi are a few landowners and cultivators, but as a class, they are the physicians and priests of the people. The Kānyakubja are mostly teachers of Sanskrit and Hindi; but many have become agriculturists and some are petty zamīndārs: the very poor among them become cooks, as any caste can eat food cooked by a Brāhman. They have two titles, Sarwariya and Saryapari, and in general do not act as priests, as they do not receive gifts.

The Musahars, who number 36,685, are considered to be aborigines of the country and work as labourers, ploughmen, etc.

They are very poor, live in wretched huts, and will eat almost any animal, even wild cats, frogs and squirrels.

Pāsīs. The Pāsīs (35,470) are almost entirely occupied in tapping *tāri* trees and selling the *tāri* liquor. Those who cannot find support in this work are labourers. Some have also a little cultivation. It is characteristic of this caste that they make offerings to the east wind in order that they may have a good toddy season.

Dhānuks. The Dhānuks (35,155) are diggers and excavators, workers on embankments, etc. Locally they are supposed to be descended from Kurmis who sold themselves as slaves; but the name shows that they were originally bowmen, and they are probably an offshoot from one of the non-Aryan tribes. Colonel Waddell has pointed out that the caste occupying the small wards of Patna city adjoining the old wooden walls of ancient Pataliputra consists almost exclusively of Dhānuks, and he has therefore suggested that they are "probably the descendants of the old soldiery who kept watch and ward over these ancient battlements in ancient times." *

Kāndus. The Kāndus (28,760) are the grain parchers of the district. They also sell parched grain, sweetmeats, etc., and some work as labourers. A feature of their religion is the worship of Ganināth, who has a temple at Nawāda (Khusrupur) in the Bārḥ subdivision and is worshipped elsewhere in the family *devatā-ghar*. Like other low castes, they attribute illness to demoniacal possession; and the usual method of exorcism is to kill a pigeon, and pour some country spirit and a drop of the exorcist's blood on it, while the latter expels the evil spirit by means of incantations.

Hajjāms. The Hajjāms (28,381) are by profession barbers, being attached to certain families and paid in grain, a not unusual payment being 10 seers per adult per annum; sometimes also they have small *jāgirs*. They are also employed as messengers to take invitations to festivals and ceremonies, and to call *panchāyats*; for this they receive payment in money or grain. At harvest time they have a recognized claim to a small quantity of grain from each cultivator among their clients, and thus always have enough to live on in good seasons, though they have no capital to fall back on in times of want. Those who attend Europeans and rich natives are paid in cash, which they are usually able to lay by, and thus make a little money. As a rule, however, they are poor.

Barhis. The Barhis (26,137) are carpenters by profession, and as such form a recognized part of the village community. They make and

* L. A. Waddell, *Report on the Excavations at Pataliputra* (Patna), Calcutta, 1903.

repair the ploughs and other agricultural implements for the villagers. They are paid partly in grain and kind, and are given about a maund of grain a year for each plough they make or mend.

The only other caste with more than 25,000 members consists of the Kāyasths (25,217), the writer caste of Bihār. They are largely employed in Government offices, and many as writer-constables and superior officers in the police. They despise trade and have a good deal of class pride. Their family ceremonies are conducted with great expense, though they are usually very poor. They have a special festival, the Dāwāt Pūjā, on which they worship their pen and ink, and observe a general holiday.

There are several local institutions, but they are generally literary, theological, or social associations or clubs, with comparatively few members, and their influence and reputation are purely local. The most noticeable exception is the Bihār Landholders' Association, which has its headquarters at Patna, but represents the interests of the landlords of the whole of Bihār. There is also a branch of the Indian National Congress, which is supported chiefly by pleaders and a few zamindārs, besides a branch of the Kāyasth Sabhā, which has been formed to further the interests of the Kāyasths. The Bihār Hitaishi Library is a reading club in Patna city, to which a number of the educated and wealthy native gentlemen belong; and another purely social institution is the Victoria Jubilee Club, which is supported by the native society of Bankipore and the west end of Patna. There is one Muhammadan Association, the Anjumān Islāmīa, which deals mainly with social questions and keeps a watchful eye on the progress of events bearing on the interests of Muhammadans, and of the Sunni sect in particular. Among other associations may be mentioned the Bihār Young Men's Institute, the Theosophical Society and the Gorakshini Sabhā. The association last named, which is maintained for the protection of cattle, is chiefly supported by Mārwaris and other members of the merchant class, who display more fervour than most of their co-religionists towards the objects of Hindu veneration.

The principal newspapers published in Patna are the Bihār Times and the Bihār Herald. The former is a bi-weekly paper, which is the organ of the Bihāri educated classes; the latter is a weekly paper, which is the organ of the Bengali colony. Both are published in English and deal with social and political affairs and current local news. There are also two weekly vernacular papers, viz., the Al Punch, a semi-comic paper published in Urdū, and the Sikohh, published in Hindi, which deals with matters of educational and general interest.

CHAPTER IV.

RELIGIONS.

GENERAL
ASPECTS.

THE history of religion in Patna has a special interest, as this district was the early home both of Buddhism and of Jainism. A great part of Buddha's life was spent at Rājgir, and there the first great Buddhist Council was held. Several centuries before the commencement of the Christian era, Buddhism had become the religion of the royal house, and in later days the district was a centre from which Buddhist learning radiated and Buddhist missionaries penetrated to distant parts of Asia. Patna also witnessed the rise and development of Jainism; at Pāwāpuri its founder, Mahāvira, died; and it was from this district that in the fourth century B. C. the Jain order began to spread over India. Buddhism, as an active form of faith, has passed away, but there still appear to be traces of its influence in a few popular superstitions; and though Jainism has an insignificant number of adherents, the sacred shrines of the land of its birth still attract pilgrims from all parts. Patna again contains the birth-place of the great Sikh leader, Guru Govind Singh, one of the most sacred of all spots in the eyes of his followers; the same city was the headquarters of one of the earliest Christian Missions in Hindustān; and in later times it was the centre of the Wahabi propaganda. Throughout all these religious movements the Hinduism of the great bulk of the people has persisted, finding expression, now as centuries ago, in many primitive superstitions and quaint observances.

TRACES OF
BUDDHISM.

Before proceeding to give some account of the religions now prevalent, a reference may be made to the few traces of Buddhism which still linger in this district, which witnessed the birth, growth and splendid development of the Buddhist faith. Buddhism as a religion is dead, but there are certain traditions and customs which seem to date back to the days of its prosperity. One such survival may be seen in the worship of a mound called Bhikna Kunwār or the mendicant prince at the north-eastern base of the mound in Patna city, called Bhikna Pahāri, i.e., the hill of the mendicant monk. "The object," writes Colonel Waddell, "here worshipped under the title of the Bhikna Kunwār

is the image of a many-peaked hill with a pathway leading up from the base along a ledge and climbing a steep valley to a tortuous recess in which the cave was situated. It is, and always has been, without any enclosure and uncovered by any awning or roof. This is clearly the fac-simile in miniature of the historic hermitage hill built by Asoka for prince Mahendra, who afterwards became the Buddhist Apostle of Ceylon. In Asoka's time objective Buddhism had not yet reached beyond the stage of relic worship; and here we find in the Bhikna Kunwār the practice of that primitive stage of Buddhism still conserved. The prince's hermitage is worshipped under his name. This image is worshipped by the semi-aborigines of the country—the Dosādhs, Ahīrs and Goālās—with offerings of flowers, fruits, milk, sweetmeats and silken thread, in the same manner as the remote ancestors of the present generation of worshippers paid homage to the mendicant prince Mahendra in Asoka's day. As the Dosādhs are essentially worshippers of devils and malignant ghosts, they now add to the above offerings their habitual wine libation and an occasional pig sacrifice; but it is remarkable that these are applied to the outer side of the hillock, while all the truly Buddhist offerings of milk, rice, sweetmeats, flowers and fruits are deposited in the recess half-way up the hill, where the cave appears to have been situated, and the outer entrance to which faces eastwards. The higher caste Hindus in the neighbourhood pay the Dosādhs to make offerings on their behalf.

"The history of this image, so far as can be ascertained from the hereditary Dosādh priest in charge of it, is that it existed on the top of the mound of Bhikna Pahāri, to which it gave its name from time immemorial until about 1780 A. D., when the ancestor of the present Nawāb Sāheb began building his house upon the hill and close to the image. The tradition goes that the building fell down several times and could not be completed until the Muhammadan noble besought the priest, the great-grandfather of the present one, to remove the image, and accompanied the request with a present of money. It was then removed to the site where it now is.

"The image is about four and a half feet high and made of clay. As it exists quite in the open and unprotected by any roof, it is partially eroded and washed away during the rains. It is therefore repaired after each rainy season. Its present shape is that which has been handed down hereditarily in the priest's family as the orthodox shape; but why this particular shape was given it the priest is unable to say. The survival of this image with a well-preserved form during all these centuries is a most

curious fact in the history of idol-worship, especially when it is remembered that the image is made of perishable plastic material requiring constant renewal, and the worshippers, as well as their priests, are quite unaware that the object which they worship is a hill."

Two other superstitions have also been observed which appear to date back to Buddhist times. Thus, the people of Patna still repeat the legend quoted in the seventh century by Hiuen Tsiang that a stone slab, found in Buland Bagh and identified with that on which Buddha last stepped before crossing the Ganges to die at Kapilavastu, always comes back to its old place wherever it may be moved. Equally curious is the legend about the well or pit called Agam Kuān at Patna, which has been identified with the hell of Asoka mentioned by Hiuen Tsiang as having contained fiery cauldrons and ovens for torturing hapless prisoners. According to his account, Asoka was converted to Buddhism through seeing that a Buddhist monk, who had been cast into a furnace in this hell, remained unscathed and was found miraculously seated on a lotus flower. "The very same legend," says Colonel Waddell, "which the Chinese pilgrim records in regard to its torture-chamber, is still related by the Jain priests of the temple adjoining this Agam well. They tell how a monk named Sudarian was thrown by the king of Pataliputra into a fiery furnace in the neighbourhood; but he remained unscathed and was found seated serenely on a throne of lotuses, to the astonishment of the king, who ordered his release and afterwards patronised him and established him in the immediate neighbourhood.

"The current popular legend of this Agam well or pit associates the place both with heat and with hell. It is regarded with horror, and though actively venerated, its water is never drunk. It is specially worshipped during the hot weather beginning with the onset of the hot winds in March and lasting for four months. During these months, and specially on the 8th day of each month, troops of women and children come bringing offerings of money and flowers which they throw into the well, and they especially pray for protection against the disfiguring fever of small-pox. The largest gathering is on the Agri Mela on the 8th day of the month of Asārh (May-June), at which over 100,000 people attend and goats are sacrificed. The modern legend also associates it with the Indian hell, alleging that the well leads down to hell in the centre of the earth, and that a heavy piece of wood, which was lost in the ocean was found by a sage down this well,

* L. A. Waddell, *Discovery of the Exact Site of Asoka's Classic Capital of Pataliputra*, Calcutta, 1892.

which, according to the local Brahmanical etymology, means 'the bottomless' pit (*Agaham*), though the word is never so pronounced by the people themselves.

* The great antiquity of this pit or 'well' is undoubted. It is reported to have been a custom in the early Muhammadan rule, since 700 years ago, for every newly-arrived Muhammadan official to proceed to the well and throw in a gold or silver coin according to the wealth of the individual. It seems to be a vestige of Asoka's 'hell'; and its position here, between the palace and the old city and adjoining Tulsi Mandi, which name implies the market-place of the king, is in keeping with the possibility that here was the site of the royal slaughter-house or out-kitchen which, as Dr. Kern suggests, was in after days transformed by the life-cherishing Buddhist monks into a hell where Asoka wantonly condemned innocent lives to a horrible death." *

Though Jainism has very few local adherents, there are some JAINISM. very sacred Jain shrines and places of pilgrimage which are visited every year by crowds of pilgrims. These shrines are at Patna, Rājgir and Pāwarpuri. At Patna there are 2 temples in the quarter known as Kamaldah near the railway station. One, built on a high mound of brick ruins, bears an inscription stating that in the year 1848 the congregation dwelling at Pātaliputra began the building of the temple of the illustrious Sthūlabhadra. This saint was the patriarch of the early Jain church in the first part of the third century B. C., at the time when the canon of the Svetambar sect was collected by the council of Pātaliputra. According to local tradition, he died at this spot, which is now a favourite place of pilgrimage amongst the Jains. In the lower temple is a shrine dedicated to Sudarsan, where the attendant priest paints every morning a fresh footprint in saffron on a block of stone, and near the door is a *pinda* or food offering to the fierce deity, Bhairab. Sudarsan is the hero of the legend given above, and, according to the Hindus' account, the father of Pātali, the mythical founder of the city, the classic name of which is preserved in this inscription.

Rājgir, the ancient centre of Buddhism, is another sacred place of the Jains, who come there in great numbers to visit the shrines crowning each hill. These shrines contain numerous Jain images and generally a stone with the footprints of some Jain Tirthankar. Of all the places in the district, however, the most sacred is Pāwarpuri. Here a temple called Thalmandar marks the spot where Mahāvira died, and another temple called Jalmandar stands in the midst of a great tank on the spot where he was

* L. A. Waddell, *Report on the Excavations at Pātaliputra, Calcutta, 1903.*

burned. No living thing is killed in this sacred lake; when fish die, their bodies are carefully brought ashore and buried; and to this day the priests still chant hymns in praise of Mahāvira after the lapse of 2,400 years.

HINDU-
ISM.
Popular
beliefs.

The great majority of the Hindus of Patna are uneducated men of low caste who know but little of the higher side of their religion. Reverence for Brāhmins and the worship of the orthodox Hindu gods are universal, but, as a matter of every-day practice, the ordinary villager endeavours to propitiate the evil spirits and godlings, which he and his ancestors have worshipped from time immemorial. Most of these are regarded as malignant spirits, who produce illness in the family and sickness among the cattle, if not appeased. They affect the ordinary life of the peasant far more directly and vitally than the regular Hindu gods; and consequently, the great mass of the illiterate Hindus, as well as some of the most ignorant Muhammadans, are careful to make periodical offerings to them. They form no part of the orthodox Hindu pantheon, but the villagers give them a kind of brevet rank; and for practical purposes they are the gods most feared and therefore most worshipped by the majority of Hindus. There is no space here to give a full account of the various manifestations of this worship, and all that can be attempted is to mention a few instances of local deities and religious observances; some of these observances, such as the totemistic worship of wolves by Kahārs, have been already referred to in the preceding chapter.

As a rule, it may be said that the spirits and godlings of this popular religion are evil and malignant; but there is one notable exception, a goddess of the Kurmīs, named Bandi Māi, who, it is reported, "is believed to be very kind-hearted and does not easily lose her temper." Goats, cakes and sweetmeats are offered to her; and in some villages a gold or silver coin is placed on the mound of earth which serves as an altar. Fresh coins are added at every marriage ceremony, and when there is a large number, they are strung together and the necklace thus formed is put round the lucky bridegroom's neck. Such a genial spirit is very rare; and the majority are of a malicious nature like Naika, a newly deified spirit, who came into existence about 50 years ago. The genesis of this spirit was as follows. A villager, it is said, was possessed by an evil spirit, and on an exorcist being called in, the spirit speaking through the man's mouth declared that he was a new-comer who was desirous of worship; if this was not given, he would bring great calamities on the whole family. The man's family thereupon deified this spirit, and this

worship spreading, Naika became a god of the Kāndus, Tātwas and other low castes.

Another curious example of deification is that of Amāsan Bibi, who is believed to have been originally a lady doctor of no mean skill. She is now invoked by women to cure the sick, and it is common to call upon her name when administering medicine, and to place the cup, after it is empty, inverted on the ground. The custom is to take a small piece of earth, wave it thrice round the patient's head, and keep it in a small niche in the house; on recovery, sweetmeats equal in weight to this piece of earth are offered to Amāsan Bibi. Goraiyā is a specially popular godling in Patna. He is a male hero of Dosādh origin, who is said to have been a bandit chief. In the songs sung in his honour he is spoken of as a great warrior who came from Delhi with a few followers, and died fighting at Mehnāwān near Sherpur in this district, where his chief shrine still is. He is now worshipped throughout the district by the low castes, and even by some members of the high castes, such as Bābhans. The usual representation of Goraiyā is a stone or mound of earth under a tree outside the village, at which offerings of goats, sweetmeats, milk and *ghi* are made, to be taken away afterwards, by the Dosādhs. A similar deified hero is Amar Singh, a Rajput who lived near Bārhi in a village of which all the other inhabitants were Mallāhs. He was killed by them out of envy, and from that time haunted the village and tormented the Mallāhs, until they promised to worship him. He is now revered throughout the district, and is propitiated by sacrifices of goats under a *pipal* tree, the head of the goat being thrown into some river. Another local deity is Ganināth, whose temple is at Nawāda in the Bārhi subdivision.

Hindus have also adopted some religious customs from the lower class of Muhammadans. As instances of this may be mentioned the practice observed occasionally by Hindus of launching paper boats on the Ganges, after a marriage or the birth of a child, in honour of Khwāja Khizr, and the worship of Pānch Pīr by the Kalwārs of Bārhi and by low castes such as Kahārs, Goālās, Kāndus, Kumhārs, etc.; it is noticeable that among the five personages which in Patna are revered as the Pānch Pīr are two with Hindu names, viz., Sahaja, who is identified with Mahāmāyā, and Ajab Hāthile, who is regarded as the same as Hanumān.

Of the more orthodox deities of the Hindu pantheon the most popular is Kali, whose chief temple is in Patna city at Kalisthān near Mangles' tank. In her various forms she is worshipped by all Hindus at all times of the year. In the form of Durgā she is regarded as the tutelary goddess of the city, and there

Worship
of Kali.

are 2 old shrines there dedicated to her under the name of Patan Devi, one in the Chafik and the other in Alamganj. Under the form of Sitalā she is worshipped by all Hindus, from Brāhmins down to Doms, whenever there is an epidemic of small-pox. When any one is attacked by the disease, a small piece of ground near the patient's bed is smeared with cow-dung and a fire is lit there, on which *ghī* is poured and incense burnt. A Māi is called in who sings songs in honour of Sitalā, while the patient is given sweetmeats and fanned with a twig of the *nim*, which is her favourite tree.

The propitiation of Sitalā is practically the only remedy resorted to on an outbreak of small-pox; and low class Hindus and Muhamnadans are often afraid to have their children vaccinated lest they should incur her wrath. She is also the goddess of cholera, and whenever there is an outbreak, the people propitiate her by sprinkling in her name the entrance of their houses with *chhak*, i.e., water in which cardamom and cloves have been mixed, and the villagers subscribe to have hymns (*pāt*) in her praise recited by the Brāhmins. In the same spirit the godling Bighin Māi, who is regarded as Kālī's attendant, is worshipped during epidemics at cross-roads; a pit is dug and a fire lit in it, sweetmeats are placed there and incense burnt, while the people all sing hymns in her honour.

Another peculiar form of Kālī worship consists of what are known as *khappar* processions. Whenever there is an epidemic of disease, the village *ojhās* or exorcists start out from the village carrying earthen pots in which incense is burning. Followed by the villagers, they proceed in the direction of Calcutta with deafening cries of *Kālī Māi ki jai*, and leave the pots and burning incense in the next village. The inhabitants of each village in turn then take them on. The most noted temples of Sitalā in the district are at Agam Kuān near the railway station at Patna and at Maghrā in the Bihār subdivision, to both of which the relatives or friends of small-pox stricken patients flock to invoke Sitalā to grant a cure or at least mitigate the virulence of the disease.

Religious
movements

It must not be supposed that demonolatry of the type described above monopolizes the religious life of the ignorant Hindus of the district. The same village will contain a temple of Siva or Vishnu with its regular Brāhman priest, as well as the little mound of earth, the tree, the block, or the stone, which marks the haunt of the evil spirit. The worship of both goes on side by side, and the same man will make his little offerings to the Grām Devatā or village god whom the Brāhman does not recognize, and to the orthodox gods of Brahmanical worship.

The latter has a very strong hold over the people generally, and striking proof of its strength was afforded, in 1893-94, when there was an outburst of religious excitement which here, as in other parts of Bihār, found expression in the anti-kine-killing agitation, the ploughmen's begging movement and the tree-daubing mystery.

The first movement appears to have been due to the activity of the Gorakshini Sabhās or associations for the protection of cattle. These societies, the legitimate object of which is the care of diseased, aged and otherwise useless cattle, started a crusade against the killing of kine, sent out emissaries to preach their doctrines, and collected subscriptions to further their objects; some Goālās round Dinapore, who had made small fortunes in the butter trade, being among the most active supporters of the movement. The result was a series of outbreaks, large crowds of Hindus suddenly rising against their Muhammadan neighbours in order to prevent their sacrificing or slaughtering kine for food, and that though there was no sign of any attempt to wound the religious feelings of the Hindus. In this district a large mob of Hindus attacked a convoy of 300 cattle on the way to Dinapore in charge of an agent of the Commissariat Department close to the Masaurhi thāna. The convoy managed to escape to the thāna with the drove, losing only one of the cattle; but when the police arrested some suspected persons, the whole of the villages concerned turned out, attacked the police with loud cries of "Gau Gohar," and rescued the prisoners. After this, a body of armed police was sent; but the guilty villages were completely deserted, the inhabitants decamping with all their goods, women, children and cattle. Prompt measures were taken to prevent similar outbreaks; and though popular excitement ran high, the Bakrid passed off quietly, except at Hilsā in the Bihār subdivision, where there were riots for two days running.

The ploughmen's begging movement, or, as it should more properly be called, the Mahādeo pūja, was a curious exhibition of religious feeling which occurred soon afterwards. All ploughmen, the story goes, were obliged to give their cattle three days' rest and go round the neighbouring villages begging. With the proceeds three wheaten cakes were prepared—one for the ploughman himself, one for his cattle, while the third had to be buried under their stalls. This penance was performed by the people in consequence of a rumour that it had been imposed by the god Mahādeo to expiate the sin committed by the agricultural community in overworking their cattle. For some time the people continued to carry out, with scrupulous care, the orders

which they supposed had been given them by their god. The remarkably elaborate nature of this penance gives reason, however, to suppose that it had been carefully thought out; and its inception and spread among the villages have been attributed to the efforts of those interested in the Gorakshini agitation to keep the movement afloat.

The tree-
daubing
mystery.

Tree-daubing was another widespread movement, the meaning of which afforded many grounds for speculation. By the most reliable reports it commenced about the latter end of February 1894 in the north-east corner of Bihār in the neighbourhood of the Janakpur shrine, which lies across the border in Nepal. The movement consisted in marking trees with daubs of mud, in which were stuck hairs of different animals, buffaloes' hair and pigs' bristles predominating. It slowly spread through the Gangetic districts, eastwards into Bhāgalpur and Purnea, and westwards through many of the districts of the United Provinces. As an explanation of the movement, it was suggested at the time that the sign was intended as an advertisement of the shrine of Janakpur; and this view was accepted officially. Others, again, pointed out that it was suspicious that it should follow the Gorakshini agitation, which was hostile to the administration, and that it was intended to promote some movement antagonistic to British rule. Others, however, held that the marks originated merely with cattle rubbing themselves against trees.

Sheo
Narayanis.

In concluding this sketch of Hindu popular religion, reference may be made to the two sects known as Sheo Narayanis and Kaulas. "The Sheo Narayanis," writes Mr. Gait in the Bengal Census Report of 1901, "are a small sect founded about two centuries ago by a Rājput named Sheo Narayan of Ghāzipur. They believe in one formless God, forbid idolatry, and venerate their original Guru, whom they regard as an incarnation of the almighty. The sacred book of the sect is known as the Sabda-Sant or Guru Granth. It contains moral precepts and declares that salvation is to be attained only by unswerving faith in God, control over the passions, and implicit obedience to the teachings of the Guru. Their great annual festival is on the 5th night after the new moon of Māgh, when they assemble in the house of one of their fraternity, and sing songs and read extracts from the Guru Granth. When a man wishes to become a Sheo Narayani, he selects one of the sect, belonging to a caste not inferior to his own, who imparts to him the *mantra* of initiation. He is then enjoined to have faith in God (Bhagabān) and the original Guru, and is given a certificate of admission. This is done in the presence of several members of the sect, whose names

and addresses are noted in the certificate. The Shoo Narayanis bury their dead, and one of the great inducements to join the fraternity is said to be the knowledge that they will give a decent burial to their comrades when they die, and will not allow their bodies to be touched by sweepers. The ordinary caste restrictions are observed, save only in the case of the extremists who adopt an ascetic life." In this district Shoo Narayanis are now only found among the lowest classes, and are declining in numbers. There is one considerable colony of Chamars in Patna City; the remainder are Dosādhs and Mallahs, and in a few cases Kurnis and Kāndus. Their numbers are, however, inconsiderable.

The Kaulas are one of the sects professing Śāktism. Starting with the premise that all things are the manifestation of one universal spirit, the sect holds as its principal tenet that nothing is common or unclean. Thus, on the one hand, the Kaulas deny the distinctions of caste, on the other, they partake of things commonly regarded as unclean. The denial of caste does not extend, however, beyond the meetings of the sect, when members of all classes eat and drink together. Even at these meetings, it is a Brahman who officiates, as in any orthodox sect; no special *tilak* is worn, only the ordinary round *sindur* mark of the Kali worshipper; and it is expressly laid down that outside the meetings of the sect each man falls into his own caste. The five essentials of worship, which always takes place at night, are fish, flesh, wine, mystical gestures with the fingers (*mudra*), and sexual intercourse. In practice, however, the fourth essential is taken to mean an edible of a round shape, such as *laddu*, *luri* or *kachauri*. They use incantations known as *kil*, *kawach* and *argalā*, these being a kind of auxiliary spell prefixed to the recitation of a *mantra* either to give it efficacy or to avoid the evil which might result from some error or misquotation. *Kil* and *argalā* (i.e. nail and bolt) are of the former class and unclean, as it were, the efficacy of the *Sāstras*; *kawach* is the 'armour' which protects against misuse. About 1850 a certain Pandit, named Subhankar Misr, from Benares gave a great impetus to the sect in Patna City, but the members are now on the decline. It is, however, impossible to obtain figures, as secrecy is one of the rules of the sect.

In Hüpper's Statistical Account the Kaulas or Kaulikas of Patna are treated as identical with the Bām Marg, but this appears to be open to doubt. "The term Bām Marg", writes Mr. H. T. Cullis, *J.L.C.*, City Magistrate, Patna, "is the designation of one of the two main divisions of the Śākta sects, the other being the Dakṣiṇ Marg. Dakṣiṇ and Bām (right and

left) must be understood as meaning respectively 'in accordance with the Vedas' and 'not in accordance with the Vedas.' In the Bengal Census Report of 1901 it is said—'The opposition between Śāktism and Vedic Hinduism is expressly stated in the Mahānirvāṇa Tantra, where it is said that the *mantras* contained in the Vedas are now devoid of all energy and resemble snakes deprived of their venom. In the Satya and other ages they were effective, but in the Kālī Yuga they are, as it were, dead.' According to my information, this denial of the efficacy of the Vedas is the mark not of all Śāktism but of extreme Śāktism or Bām Marg. The name Kaula or Kaulika means either followers of Kaula Upanishad or simply followers of the traditional or ancestral way (from *kul*, family). In any case, it is a question whether the term is, strictly speaking, synonymous with Bām Margi, though undoubtedly it is often so used. Still less is it correct to regard the Kaulas as forming a third subdivision of the Śāktas along with the Dakshin Margis and Bām Margis. Rather Bām Margis and Kaula are related as genus and species, the Kaulas being a Bām Margi sect."

Regarding the difference between the Sheo Narayanis and Kaulas, Mr. Cullis writes, "The two sects are widely different. The Sheo Narayanis certainly eat and drink together without distinction of caste. They are also said (without reason I believe) to indulge in orgies of indiscriminate sexual intercourse,—this is, of course, a charge which is brought against every sect that denies the Brāhmanical rules. So far there is some resemblance to the Kaulas, but here the resemblance stops. The Kaulas are followers of the Tantras and worshippers of the "Female principle," they are a secret sect, they burn their dead and accept the ministrations of Brāhmins like orthodox Hindus. Sheo Narayanis, on the other hand, know nothing of the Tantras or of Śakti worship; their sacred book of Guru Granth is a collection of moral precepts, and the book itself is worshipped as among the Sikhs. They do not enjoin secrecy as do the Kaulas, and do not use the services of Brāhmins. Their funeral ceremonies are unique, the mourners dress in red and yellow, the bier is covered with coloured cloths, and they move along with music and singing after the manner of a marriage procession. The Kaula does not betray himself to the world by any such public ceremony. In a word, Bām Marg is one of the ancient bye-paths of Hinduism; Sheo Narayanism really stands outside Hinduism and is the work of a modern social and ethical reformer."

MUHAM-
MADANS.

The lower and uneducated classes of Muhammadans in the district are deeply infected with Hindu superstitions, especially

those regarding sickness and disease. As a rule, their knowledge of the faith they profess seldom extends beyond the three cardinal doctrines of the unity of God, the mission of Muhammad, and the truth of the Korān. Apart too from Hindu superstitions, there are certain practices not based on the Korān which are common even among the more educated Musalmāns.

The most common among these is the adoration of departed Pirs or saints, of whom there are several in Patna, viz., the saints of Bihār, Jethuli and Maner. The *dargāhs* or tombs of these Pirs are places of pilgrimage to which many persons resort for the cure of disease or the exorcism of evil spirits, or to obtain the fulfilment of some cherished wish. At Bihār there are the *dargāhs* of Mallik Ibrāhim Bayu and Hazrat Makhdūm Shāh Sharif-ud-dīn, the tomb of the latter being held in special veneration by the Muhammadans, who assemble there at the *urs* or anniversary of the death of the saint on the 5th Shawwal. At Jethuli the *dargāhs* of Shihāb-ud-dīn Jagjaut and Shāh Adam Sufi are also places of pilgrimage, a fair being held there on the 21st Zikad. In Patna there are the shrines of three Pirs called Mansūr, Marūf and Mahdi, and also the shrine of Shāh Arzāni, which is the site of another large gathering. At Maner again are the tombs of the famous saint Makhdūm Yabīā and of Shāh Daulat, and here two *melās* are held every year—one on the anniversary of the saint's death and the other in commemoration of the wedding of Ghāzi Miān.

Veneration
of saints.

Ghāzi Miān was the nephew of Mahmūd of Ghazni, and the leader of one of the early invasions of Oudh. After performing prodigies of valour, he was killed in a battle with the Hindus at Bahraich in 1034 A.D. when he was only 19 years old. He is claimed as one of the first martyrs of Islām in India, and is the type of youth and militant valour. His untimely fate has led to his veneration, and in this district the annual fair in his honour is one of the greatest gatherings in the year. It is held on the banks of the tank at Maner, and is resorted to chiefly by the lower orders of Hindus and Muhammadans. It is a bacchanalian festival or carnival like the Saturnalia, and the consumption of toddy is considerable; in the month of Jeth, in which the *melā* is held, toddy is cheapest. A mock marriage procession proceeds from the town to the tank, attended with music, and carrying earthen pitchers filled with toddy and banners called the *ghanda* or flags of Ghāzi Miān. On this occasion eunuchs assemble, and perform the ceremonies devolving on parents of the bridegroom and the bride. At a shrine on a mound east of the rest-house a

Ghāzi
Miān's
fair.

strange sight is seen in the morning of the day on which the *mela* is held. Women and girls supposed to be possessed by devils prostrate themselves before the shrine in the hope of being cured. They get into an ecstatic state, and casting themselves into a trance, excite the fit to which they are liable; incense is then applied to their nostrils, and they recover. The cure of diabolical possession is attributed to the healing power of the shrine, and hysteria and catalepsy are ascribed to the malignant acts of genii.

Mallik.

The Malliks of this district claim descent from Saiyid Ibrahim Bayu, and his soldiers, mostly his own tribesmen and relations. It is said that he was a general of Alā-ud-din Ghorī and was deputed to put down an insurrection in this part of the country. He planted garrisons in various villages, and his soldiers took Hindu women as their wives and settled there. He was given the title of Mallik on account of his brilliant victories, and the name was subsequently applied to the community which he and his soldiers founded. Ibrahim Bayu's tomb is on the Pīrpahārī hill at Bibār, and is a famous place of pilgrimage.

Sunnis and
Shiāhs.

The greater number of the Muhammadans are Sunnis, but there is a small minority of Shiāhs. These two sects, as a rule, live amicably, and the present state of affairs is a pleasant contrast to that prevailing a century ago when the Muharram was invariably marked by disputes among the rival sects, which generally ended in rioting, bloodshed, murder.

The
Wahābī
movement.

No account of the Patna Muhammadans would be complete without a reference to the Wahābī movement.* The Wahābis are so called after Muhammad Wahāb, who was born before the beginning of the 18th century in Nejd, a province of Central Arabia, and founded a sect of Muhammadans who rejected the glosses of the Imāms and denied the authority of the Sultān, made comparatively light of the authority of Muhammad, forbade the offering of prayers to any prophet or saint, and insisted on the necessity of waging war against infidels. In the beginning of the 19th century the Wahābī doctrines appear to have been carried into India by pilgrims returning from Mecca, where one Saiyid Ahmed Shāh of Rai Bareli became the leader of the sect. In 1820 he travelled south from Delhi in order to preach reform to the people of India, and incite them to join in a *jihād*, or religious war, against the Sikhs, who had oppressed the Muhammadans of the Punjab, and forbidden them the free exercise of their religion. On his way to Bengal he arrived at Patna, accompanied by a large fleet of boats carrying upwards

* For a more detailed account, see *The Wahābis in India*, by J. O'Kincaid, Calcutta Review, 1870, from which this sketch has been mainly compiled.

of 500 enthusiastic disciples, and there enrolled a number of followers, including Wilayat Ali, Inayat Ali, Shah Muhammad Hussain, Ilahi Baksh, and his son Ahmed Ulla of Sadikpur. He then departed for Calcutta, but before leaving appointed Shah Muhammad Hussain, Wilayat Ali and Inayat Ali as his caliphs or lieutenants at Patna, to enrol followers in his name, and gather supplies for the war against the Sikhs. In 1823 he was joined by Shah Muhammad Hussain with a large party of crescentaders, and at a general meeting of his caliphs permanent arrangements were made to forward supplies of men and money to support the enterprise.

In accordance with this resolution, his caliphs in Bengal commenced to make strenuous efforts to support him; Patna was fixed on as the headquarters, and Shah Muhammad Hussain was acknowledged as the local chief caliph. Numerous books and pamphlets were printed for circulation, and thus fortified, this little band of fanatics went forth to urge the Muhammadans of India to unite in one body and carry on a *jihad* for the conquest of India, to gather recruits and funds for the purpose, and to insist on the claim of Saiyid Ahmed to the title of Imām Mahdi. Wilayat Ali became the apostle of the creed in Bengal, and Inayat Ali assisted him there for a short time, but his mission lay chiefly in Central India, Hyderabad and Bombay. In 1827 Saiyid Ahmed commenced a *jihad* against the Sikhs, liberal supplies of men and money being sent him from Bengal, and the flame of war broke out along the frontier. Peshāwar was taken in 1830, and a great religious war for the conquest of the Punjab was proclaimed, for which a body of Wahābis hurried up from Patna; but in 1831 Saiyid Ahmed was killed in a battle against the Sikhs.

Wilayat Ali and Inayat Ali of Patna now became prominent leaders of the fanatical Wahābis, who after some years' fighting for which the Patna branch furnished enthusiastic recruits, firmly established their dominion over a large extent of territory along the left bank of the Indus, stretching from Haripur to Kagan and from Sittana to Kashmir. The formation of a new Sikh power under the protection of the British Government, however, made it impossible for them to retain possession of their conquests, and in 1847 they surrendered to the British agent at Haripur. Wilayat Ali and his brother, Inayat Ali, were sent in custody to their homes at Patna, and bound down in bail of Rs. 10,000 not to leave it for 4 years, but no steps were taken to prevent their doing so. Inayat Ali shortly afterwards assumed the command of the Wahābi colony at Sittana and took

active measures to carry out his long cherished design of waging war against the English; but his expedition ended in complete defeat, and though Inayat Ali escaped with the main body of the Wahābis, the rear guard under Kurram Ali, a tailor of Dinapore, was cut to pieces by the English troops.

This movement was engineered from Patna, as was clearly proved by some letters seized in 1852 by the Punjab authorities.

It was found that an organized conspiracy to tamper with the Native Infantry at Rāwalpindi had originated at Patna, and that Wahābi leaders there, among whom was Ahmed Ullā, were collecting money and forwarding arms and supplies to the Wahābis encamped at Sittana for the purpose of the *jihad*. A search was made by the Patna Magistrate for treasonable correspondence, but the conspirators had been put on their guard and the correspondence destroyed. He reported, however, that the Wahābi sect was on the increase, and the *jihad* being preached in the houses of Wilayat Ali, Ahmed Ullā and his father Ilāhi Baksh; the Wahābis were in league with the police; and Ahmed Ullā had assembled 600 or 700 men, and was prepared to resist further enquiry and raise the standard of revolt. All that appears to have been done was to order that the conspirators should be watched, though it was clearly proved that Ahmed Ullā and other residents at Patna were forwarding arms, supplies and recruits to the frontier fanatics in furtherance of their creed. The main tenets of this creed were as follow: Firmly convinced that Saiyid Ahmed would re-appear, destroy all infidels, and subvert the British rule in India, they believed that the first duty of every true Musalmān was to further the good cause to the utmost of his power, and assist in the *jihad* or holy war. He should at once join the "leader of the fighters for the faith" (*Amir-ul-mujāhid-ud-din*), who was at that time Ahmed Ullā. All who died fighting for the faith would be martyrs (*shahid*); all who killed infidels would be heroes (*ghāsi*); and those who shrunk from the fight and gave not their wealth in support of the crescentade were accursed (*nāri*).

During the Mutiny the Wahābis rose, as related in Chapter II, but the rising was quickly put down, and their power for mischief destroyed by the prompt action of Tayler, in arresting Ahmed Ullā and the other Wahābi leaders. On the supersession of Tayler, Ahmed Ullā appears to have gained the confidence of his successor, who described him as "a mere bookman," and he was eventually made a Deputy Collector. The intrigues of the Patna Wahābis still went on, and in 1863 a frontier war broke out as the result of the crusade preached by them. The enquiries

set on foot during and after the campaign, brought to light the existence of an extensive conspiracy; 11 Wahābis were arrested, tried and found guilty, of whom 5 were residents of Patna; and further enquiry showing that the prime mover of the conspiracy in Bengal was Ahmed Ullā, he was arrested, tried and sentenced to transportation for life in 1865. The removal of Ahmed Ullā did not, however, put an end to the machinations of the Wahābis, for in 1868-69 it was again discovered that a *jihad* had for some time been preached, and collections in aid of the frontier fanatics made on a regularly organized system, agents being stationed all over the country. At Patna seven men were arrested and put on their trial; five were convicted and sentenced to transportation for life with forfeiture of property, including Amir Khān, a rich banker and money-lender, who was the most influential of the conspirators. An appeal to the High Court resulted in the sentence on him and one other only being confirmed; but these trials broke the power of the Wahābis.

Their modern representatives have discarded the designation of Wahābis, as it has become a term of reproach, and prefer to style themselves Ahl-i-Hadis. The latter name means people of the tradition, and the main characteristic of the sect is that they interpret for themselves the Hadis, i.e., the traditional sayings of Muhammad not embodied in the Korān, and do not follow any particular Imām. Its members are still, however, Wahābis in their tenets, mode of prayer and sentiments. As regards the present position of the sect, the following report has been furnished:—"Their attitude is hostile towards the Muhammadans of other sects, and the doctrines of the faith itself being based on aggression and intolerance, the Wahābis are now setting themselves against the Sunnis and Shiāhs and invading their mosques, by entering into them and, under the colour of the ritual of their own sect, folding their hands at the breast, and saying the Amen loudly, practices which tend to annoy the Sunni congregation. The word Amen is pronounced at the conclusion of the introductory chapter of the Korān in a suppressed voice by the Sunnis, and by the Ahl-i-Hadis loudly. The Ahl-i-Hadis are using all means in their power to obtain exclusive management of mosques which are purely Sunni or Shiah institutions from time immemorial. The process of proselytism is very brisk, and the number of the followers of the sect is increasing day by day, the converts being drawn from the lower orders of Muhammadans, the weavers, vegetable-sellers and tailors; the well-to-do Wahābis are hide merchants by profession. The Wahābis of the lower orders clip their moustaches and are particular that their

trousers do not reach the ankles. They carry a handkerchief on their shoulder. The more staunch wear a black turban and carry a black handkerchief."

SIKHS.

Patna city was the birth-place of Guru Govind Singh, the great founder of the Sikh military brotherhood, who was born in 1660 in a house near the Chauk. The spot is now marked by a temple called Har Mandir, containing his cradle and shoes and the holy book of the Sikhs, the Granth Saheb, which is said to contain the Guru's name written by himself with the point of an arrow. There is a small *sangat* or subsidiary place of worship attached to this temple; and another *sangat*, which is in the hands of the Nanakshāhis, contains a sacred tree believed to have sprung up miraculously from a tooth-pick placed in the ground by Govind Singh. The temple is one of the 4 great sacred places (*takhts* or *darbars*) of the Sikhs, who visit it on pilgrimage. The pilgrims are bound to appear before the Guru Granth Saheb, or Bara Saheb as it is also called, on the first day of entering the town, and offer *ardas* or *karā parshād*, i.e., sweetmeats specially prepared for the purpose. The Mahanth of this temple must be an Akālī *pardeshi*, i.e., he must belong to the puritanical sect of Akālīs mentioned below, and not be a native of Patna, a salutary rule preventing the funds of the temple becoming the hereditary perquisite of any one family. The provisions of Act XX of 1863 are applicable to this temple, and under that Act the District Judge has authority to appoint a manager, either temporarily or permanently, subject to liability to dismissal for misconduct. Such managers have been appointed on several occasions to look after the endowment, and incidentally, in the discharge of their duties, to supervise religious worship.

There is a small Sikh community settled at Patna, who have to the present day preserved intact the faith and ceremonies of Guru Govind Singh. Patna is consequently one of the few places in India where the Sikh religion may still be seen in something like its primitive purity. "At Patna," writes Mr. Macauliffe,* "the Sikhs pay the strictest attention to the injunctions of Guru Govind. Sleeping or walking they are never without the habiliments known as the 'five Ks.' So strong is the aversion of the more orthodox among them to Hindus, that they will not even partake of food cooked by their hands. This is carrying orthodoxy a long way, but still further is it carried when they will not partake of food cooked even by a Sikh, who has not on his person all the five Ks." The five Ks (*kakars*) are—the

* M. Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion under Banda and its present condition*, Calcutta Review, Vol. LXXIII.

kesh or long hair, the *kirpan*, a small knife with an iron handle round which the *kesh* is rolled, the *kanga* or wooden comb, the *kachh* or drawers, and the *kar* or iron bangle for the wrist. The Patna Sikhs also strictly observe the five injunctions of Govind Singh that no Sikh should cut his hair, eat flesh killed according to Muhammadan law, have connections with Muhammadan women, or eat anything but a true Sikh. With a few exceptions, they are all Akalis, and most of them are Akalis of the strictest Sikh order. They wear a dark blue dress and lofty turbans ornamented with steel quoits, daggers and knives, and are careful to keep their religion pure and undefiled.

The foundation of the first Christian Mission in Patna is generally attributed to the Capuchin Fathers, who settled there in 1706; but it appears that the Jesuits had a settlement there nearly a century earlier. The establishment of a Jesuit Mission at Patna is spoken of as a *fait accompli* in the *Litteræ Annuæ*, Cochin,* December 20th, 1620, in which it is said—"The Mission of Patna, whose beginnings are so glorious to the Society, has been but lately started: It owes its foundation to a Viceroy, who has newly come to that part of the country, and is called a Nawab."† This Nawab, it goes on to say, hearing from some Portuguese merchants, who were visiting Patna, that some Jesuit Fathers had settled in Bengal, invited "the Captain-General of that place," i.e., apparently the Rector of the College of Hoogly, to come to Patna and volunteered to defray all the expense of building a church and of maintaining a priest. On his arrival, the Nawab entertained him with princely hospitality, confessed that he had been baptized at Goa, and had asked him to come in order that he might make his confession, build a church, and live like a true Christian. The Nawab was as good as his word, gave a grant for building the church, and assigned the priest in charge a good house to live in and the income of a village for his support. This Nawab was Mukarab Khan, who, though he boasted of being a Christian, did not profess his faith publicly, for fear he might lose his appointment. He had many wives, and was forbidden the sacraments on that account. He allowed the priest to see only the principal one in order to instruct and baptize her; and the Father, Simon Figueredo, who visited Patna in 1620,

* In the beginning of the 17th century the Jesuit Missions were divided into 2 Provinces, Goa and Cochin, and Bengal was a dependency of the latter.

† See the Foundation of the Jesuit Mission of Patna (1620), *Catholic Herald of India*, Aug. 22, 1906. I am indebted to the Revd. H. Hosten, S. J., for information about this Mission.

Capuchin
Mission.

thought that he only kept a priest there in order to bring Portuguese merchants to the city and so enrich himself.

The Jesuit Mission was probably short-lived, for it was not till the 18th century that a permanent settlement was made there as a result of the decision to establish a mission in Tibet, which was made a Prefecture assigned to the Capuchin Fathers. In 1704 we find that Father Joseph of Ascoli died at Patna.

Other Capuchin Fathers came there on their way to Lhasa. One remained behind at Patna, where in 1713 he erected a hospice, and Patna continued to be the basis of the Tibet Mission till 1745, when the heroic Father Horace of Peña left Lhasa and returned to Patna in Nepal, in despair at the orders that he and his companions might preach only on condition that they declared the Tibetan religion to be good and perfect. The mission hospice at Patna was destroyed on the 25th June 1763, when the English made their attack on the city, and the priests narrowly escaped being murdered by Mir Kasim Ali's soldiers during the fighting which ensued. The church was despoiled and profaned, and three fathers found praying there, one of whom was the Superior, John of Brescia, were assaulted, stripped naked, and nearly killed. The records state that the church was reopened on the 31st July 1763, and that divine service continued without interruption; the first entry is of a burial on the 14th November 1763, *i.e.*, some days after the English recaptured the city.

Father Joseph of Roveto, one of the fathers attacked by Mir Kasim's soldiers, was now appointed Prefect Apostolic of the Nepal Mission, in which Patna was then included; and owing to his exertions the present church was built on the site of the old hospice (1772-79), Signor Tiretto of Venice being the architect. The priests at this time were in high favour at the Nepal court owing to their medical skill; and an interesting memorial of connection with the Nepalese is found in a bell with the name Maria on it, and a Latin inscription to the effect that it was presented in 1782 by Bahadur Shah, son of Prithwi Narayan, king of Nepal. A story is told of him that he wanted the priests to teach him physical science, and that they refused unless he agreed to learn Christianity as well. He rejected this proposal on the ground that it would be inconvenient for a prince to turn Christian, but offered to supply three men who would become Christians instead of him. The priests declined, and this so surprised Bahadur Shah, that he could only account for it by supposing that the priests did not really know science, and so wanted to evade the teaching of it.*

* H. Beveridge, *The City of Patna*, Calcutta Review, vol. LXXVI.

In 1845 Patna was made the headquarters of a Vicariate Apostolic, and in 1886, on the establishment of the hierarchy in India, it was constituted part of the newly formed Diocese of Allahabad. The mission has been entrusted to the Capuchin Fathers of the Province of Bologna, and the Fathers are in charge of the Catholic communities at the 5 stations of Patna, Khagaul, Dinapore, Bankipore and Kurji. At Bankipore there is a convent, which manages two orphanages, one for native girls, and the other for European and Eurasian girls, to which a boarding and day school is attached. At Kurji there is a large European boys' school maintained by the Irish Christian Brothers.

The other Christian missions in the district are of modern growth; they are the London Baptist Missionary Society, the London Baptist Zanāna Mission and the Zanāna Bible and Medical Mission. The London Baptist Mission has stations at Dinapore, Bankipore and Patna city, and employs a staff of 4 missionaries, an assistant home missionary and several evangelists. Its chief work is evangelistic, but it also keeps up a boarding school for Christians at Bankipore and several elementary schools. The London Baptist Zanāna Mission, with headquarters at Bankipore, has 3 missionaries, who are aided in their work by several bible women. In addition to evangelistic work, it maintains a boarding school for Christian girls at Bankipore and two day schools for non-Christians. The Zanāna Bible and Medical Mission possesses a well equipped hospital, the "Duchess of Teck Hospital," in Patna city, the staff consisting of 2 lady doctors, 2 European lady superintendents and several well-trained nurses. Its work is partly evangelistic and partly medical.

Other Missions.

CHAPTER V.

PUBLIC HEALTH.

VITAL
STATIS-
TICS.

A COMPARISON of vital statistics for any lengthy periods is rendered impossible by the changes in the system of registering births and deaths which have taken place from time to time. In 1869 the duty of reporting deaths was imposed on the village *chaukidars*, and in 1876 the system was extended to births; but the returns received were so incomplete that they were soon discontinued, and, except in towns, deaths alone were registered until 1892, when the collection of statistics of births as well as of deaths was ordered, and the system now in vogue was introduced. Under this system vital occurrences are reported by the *chaukidars* to the police, and the latter submit monthly returns to the Civil Surgeon, by whom statistics for the whole district are prepared.

So far as they can be accepted—and they are sufficiently accurate for the purpose of calculating the approximate growth of the population and of showing the relative healthiness or unhealthiness of different years—the returns submitted since 1892 show that conditions were normal up to the year 1900, the recorded births exceeding the deaths by 22,762. But in January 1900 plague appeared in epidemic form, and by the close of the year the number of deaths reported as due to it was 23,022, while the deaths from all causes aggregated 86,996 and exceeded the births by 17,946. There is little doubt, however, that a great number of deaths were not reported; and the census of 1901 showed that the total population had decreased by 148,425 or by 8.4 per cent. since 1891, that even after allowing for the absence of persons born elsewhere, there was a falling off of 95,373, and that, assuming 25,000 persons were omitted from the returns, there was a net decrease of 70,000.

Since 1900 there has been a marked increase in the number of births, the birth-rate each year exceeding 40 per mille, while the average has been 43.16 per mille, as compared with 38 per mille in the preceding 5 years. But it has failed to keep pace with the rapid growth in the number of deaths, the annual death-rate

averaging 50.80 per mille, as compared with 35.12 per mille in the previous quinquennium. The result is that in the 5 years ending in 1905, the deaths recorded have exceeded the births by over 62,000, owing to the ravages of plague, which carried off nearly 92,000 persons during this short period. Only once have there been more births than deaths in the quinquennium, and that was in 1902, when there were only 2,783 deaths from plague.

The mortality in the towns has been particularly high and generally far in excess of that in rural areas. Thus the death-rate in the 4 towns of Barh, Bihar, Dinapore and Patna, though less than in other parts of the district in 1905, was as high as 61 per mille in the preceding 5 years as compared with the average of 47.7 per mille in the rest of the district. This heavy mortality is largely due to the greater virulence of the plague in these towns, for the death-rate from fever is, as a rule, less than in the villages. The loss of population has been especially great in Patna and Barh. In Patna the death-rate reached the appalling figure of 61.7 per mille in 1905 and averaged 69.5 per mille in the previous quinquennium; while in Barh the corresponding figures were 51 and 76.1 per mille.

The lowest death-rate recorded in the district since the present system of returns was introduced was in 1898, when the mortality was only 23.76 per mille, and the highest is 58.74 per mille returned in 1905. The lowest birth-rate is 27.04 per mille returned in 1892, and the highest is 45.30 recorded in 1903.

The mortality among infants is very great, and Patna has long had a bad record in this respect. In 1905 out of every 100 children born no less than 26.85 per cent. died within the first year of their life, a ratio exceeded only in two other districts in Bengal; and out of the total number of deaths over one-third occurred among children under 5 years of age. This high death-rate among infants may be ascribed to the operation of one or more of several causes, such as the poverty and consequent poor vitality of the majority of the parents; disregard of the primary rules of sanitation in the lying-in-rooms, which are generally dark, damp and ill-ventilated out-houses; want of skilled midwives; insufficient nourishment, specially when the mother is sickly; insufficient clothing, combined with neglect and exposure; ignorance and neglect in the treatment of infantile diseases; and the immaturity of parents, leading to feeble organization in the children, and enhancing the natural susceptibility to disease. Accidents incidental to birth, such as tetanus neonatorum, are very

fatal, and the practice of treating the cut end of the umbilical cord with cow-dung caused a large number of deaths among healthy infants every year. Owing partly to high infantile mortality, and even more to the mortality caused by plague, we find in Patna a population steadily declining in spite of a rising birth-rate.

PRINCIPAL
DISEASES.
Fever.

		Ratio per mille in	
		1905.	1900-04.
Patna	...	18.23	19.89
Gaya	...	36.28	25.44
Shahabad	...	37.76	23.27
Monghyr	...	28.59	23.52
Bengal	...	24.34	21.14

The greatest mortality is caused by fever, but the marginal table will show that the death-rate is not so high as in the adjoining districts or as in the Province as a whole. It has been known to fall as low as 14.93 per mille, a ratio recorded in 1902, and the maximum is 29.33 per mille recorded in 1901; but in that year a number of deaths caused by plague were ascribed to fever. The same

element of error recurs annually, as the *chaukidār* responsible for the returns—a task for which he is often eminently unfitted—indiscriminately classes a number of different diseases under the general head of fever; but there is no doubt that a very large proportion of the deaths returned are really due to malarial affections.

Some of the forms of fever now found in the district appear to have been introduced within comparatively recent times. Thus in 1882 it was reported that "the Bihār subdivision has for the past few years suffered from a malarious type of fever, accompanied by enlargement of the spleen, a visitation which was formerly entirely unknown in this part of the country"; and next year it was again reported for the same subdivision that "the malarious fever of Bengal has gradually established itself. Enlargement of the spleen with its peculiar cachexia, which was almost unknown, is a common disease now-a-days: neither towns nor villages are exempt from its ravages."

As regards the types of fever prevalent, the Civil Surgeon, Major B. H. Deare, I.M.S., has contributed the following note:—

"*Malarial fever.*—This is the most common form of fever met with in the district. The people here call it "*jara-bokhār*" or fever with rigor. It prevails both in rural as well as in town areas, though it is more prevalent in low-lying areas given up to rice cultivation. In the rural areas, where people usually live in villages made up of clusters of mud-built huts, surrounded by wide tracts of low-lying lands, which form the rice fields, the

conditions are quite favourable to the spread of malaria during the rainy season. In the villages adjoining the irrigation canals, the people suffer most from intermittent form of malarial fever. In the town areas malarial fever is most common during and after the rainy season. Mosquitoes are common throughout the year, but they are mostly of the variety *Culex Anopheles* mosquitoes are, however, found during the malarial season. All the forms of malarial fevers are met with in the district. The most common form is that caused by the benign tertian parasite. Next to that in frequency is the malignant tertian infection, while the quartan form is rare. Numerous cases have been verified by microscopic examination of blood films at the Bankipore General Hospital. Double infection with both benign and malignant tertian parasites has been met with. Clinically the course and temperature chart do not differ from the same types of fever in other malarious localities, and the only treatment is quinine; in the malignant tertian variety this must be given hypodermically.

" Cachectic fever or infections with Leishman-Donovan bodies.— This form of chronic fever with enlargement of spleen is common in the district, and up to a recent date was mistaken for malaria cachexia. In the earlier stages of the infection, it gives rise to fever of remittent type not amenable to quinine; later on it gives rise to irregular pyrexia with emaciation, often diarrhoea, great enlargement of the spleen, some enlargement of the liver, and chronic ulcers on the legs. Ten such cases were identified by spleen puncture and microscopic examination of the blood during the last year at the Bankipore Hospital.

*" Typhoid fever.—*Enteric fever is fairly common in Patna, as in Bengal. The so-called cases of remittent fever are really nothing but typhoid fever. The rash is, as a rule, absent, and the intestinal symptoms, as a rule, are not well marked. There may even be constipation instead of diarrhoea. The cause is impure drinking water. The wells of Patna are as a rule *kachha*, and the people generally use the water from them for drinking purposes.

*" Five days' fever.—*This is a class of fever which is quite separate by itself. The malarial parasite is never found in these cases. It is common in October in Patna. The fever generally begins with Coryza and pain over the whole body, but not in the joints. There is, as a rule, constipation and frontal headache of a throbbing character. The fever ranges from 103° to 104°, and after 6 days comes to normal. Quinine has no effect on this class of fever. During recovery extreme prostration is a well marked feature. Probably this is nothing more than influenza."

Plague. After fever, the most terrible scourge is plague, which in 6 years (1900-05), has carried off over 114,000 persons; no district in Bengal has suffered so much from this disease as Patna. Plague first appeared in 1900, and since then has been an annual visitation. It has now established itself firmly, coming and going with the seasons, with wonderful regularity, being most prevalent with the winter, and then practically disappearing or remaining dormant throughout the hot and rainy seasons, to recrudescence with the advent of the cold weather and attain its greatest virulence in the first 3 months of the year. For 4 years (1900-03) the epidemic was confined to those parts where easy communication and grain markets existed, the tract along the East Indian Railway and the surroundings of Bihār being attacked every year, while the south-west of the district remained immune. The disease has now spread all over the district, and no part is free from its ravages. The towns have, however, suffered far more than rural areas, the explanation apparently being that plague is a disease which thrives in congested areas.

At first, the people feared the remedies which it was sought to apply almost as much as they did the plague itself; and for some years the tradition lingered among the Goāls in the north-west of Maner that Government wished to poison them. The attitude of the people has now changed for the better. Year by year the villagers are becoming more ready to leave their houses, when plague breaks out, and encamp in the open. Muhammadan weavers, however, being fatalists, still decline to do so, and the incidence of the disease among them is consequently great. Chemical disinfection is unpopular, but disinfection by burning cow-dung cakes is understood by all and carried out by many; though not perhaps effective, it serves to inspire confidence. Anti-plague inoculation has not gained any popularity. A regular system of rat extermination has recently been introduced, and 960,000 rats were killed in 1906-07.

Cholera. Cholera breaks out every year in epidemic form at the beginning or end of the rainy season, the worst year on record being 1905 when it caused over 8,000 deaths, the death-rate being 5 per mille. It is due to the impure water-supply of the people, who obtain their drinking water from wells, which are rarely properly protected. The water in them becomes polluted during any prolonged drought, and is even more contaminated by surface washings, if there is a heavy downpour or continuous rain after very dry weather.

Dysentery and diarrhoea. Dysentery and diarrhoea are very prevalent, their incidence being greatest during the hot and rainy seasons, more

particularly just as the rains break off at their close; in 1905 the death-rate returned as due to these diseases was 4.2 per mille, and, in the preceding 5 years the average was 4.4 per mille.

As Patna is one of the 4 areas in Bengal conspicuous for the high death-rate reported under this head, a special enquiry into the cause of the mortality was made in 1905-06 by Captain Masson, I. M. S., Deputy Sanitary Commissioner. The following are extracts from that officer's report—"Out of a total of 83 cases investigated and all registered as dysentery or diarrhoea, only 32 were actually found to have died from these diseases. Fever accounted for 23, cholera for 18, teething for 2, and still-birth, childbirth, want of milk, spleen, phthisis, snake-bite, old age and obstruction of the bowels for one each. It will be noted that a great many of the cases incorrectly registered are due to fever. It must not, however, be supposed that all these cases are malarial fever; in several cases the symptoms pointed to *kāla azār*. Cholera is the other disease which has most frequently been confounded with dysentery. I have elicited the information that the villager does not consider a case as one of cholera, unless there is vomiting. Cases of two days' illness or so are thus registered as diarrhoea. The main fact which comes out of the investigation is that the enormous proportion of 61.5 per cent. of cases registered are erroneous. If in Patna generally the same conditions obtained as have been found in the Dinapore subdivision, viz., that 7 out of every 11 cases of dysentery and diarrhoea are incorrectly registered, then the actual death-rate for the district will be found to be a fairly average one. If granted to be a little above the average still, then one may attribute this result to the water-supply. That the water-supply is not of the best, may be gathered from the great prevalence of cholera, and from the local conditions which I have seen and described. In village after village one observed wells offering every facility for surface and percolation contamination."

Regarding the results of this investigation, the Sanitary Commissioner writes—"From my own knowledge of Bihār, I am inclined to believe that Captain Masson's conclusions are correct, and that the death-rate under this head is incorrect, but on the other hand, this explanation falls short in the following ways:—(1) It does not explain why the death-rate is higher in Patna than it is in Shāhabād and Gayā. (2) It does not explain the regularity with which the figures go up year by year at certain times of the year. (3) Many of the cases of dysentery and diarrhoea are in reality cholera; hence it would be expected that, in years when cholera was very prevalent, the

returns from these diseases would increase simultaneously. The figures show that such is not the case. In 1904, the district cholera return was only 79 per mille; whereas in 1903 it was 3.08, and in 1905, 5.00 per mille. The diarrhoea and dysentery rate remained very constant, 3.55, 3.46 and 4.19 in the three years. There is no relation between the two diseases. Again, both in Gayā and Shāhābād the same fact is observed, viz., cholera comes and goes, but the dysentery and diarrhoea figures vary very little.

(4) If Captain Masson's contention is correct that a large number of the cases of dysentery and diarrhoea are mostly either cholera or fever, then the curve of diarrhoea and dysentery would follow largely the curve of mortality from all causes, but the figures show that this is not the case. Thus, in Fatwā thāna in 1905 the mortality from all causes was 10 per mille above that of the year before, whilst the dysentery and diarrhoea figure was 2.5 per mille lower. Therefore I am afraid that, as regards Patna, we have not yet obtained a very satisfactory conclusion in the matter. On the one hand, we have a great deal of careful work by Captain Masson that goes to show that the high death-rate under this head is due to careless reporting, and on the other hand we have a persistent local high death-rate that shows certain characteristics year after year, the figures of which go to disprove that it is either erroneously reported cholera or fever that accounts for the high rate."

Defective
reporting.

In this connection, the following remarks of Captain Masson regarding the methods of reporting may be quoted—"The method pursued by the *chaukidars* seems to be as follows—when a *chaukidār* hears that a death occurs, he goes to the house and enquires what was the cause of death. He rarely sees the corpse, and in any case always takes the word of the relatives. He has next to get the entry made in his book, and for this purpose he seeks the *Panch* of the village, who, as a rule, is the only person who can do this. Thereafter twice a week he goes to the thāna to report. The names of the deceased persons are then written down in a register, and thereafter sent to the District Superintendent of Police, who in turn sends a return to the Civil Surgeon. . . . In the greater percentage of cases the *chaukidars* knew little or nothing of the deceased persons, even although the death occurred in their immediate vicinity. In quite a number of instances I have confronted the *chaukidār* and the person giving the information. The *chaukidār* has generally no recollection of the occurrence, and I incline to the belief that, when he gets the name of the deceased person, he has frequently to wait till he gets

some one to write the name in his book. When that person has been found, his memory finds that it has played him false, and he then suggests the name with which he is probably most familiar, and this is returned. In no other way can I account for the extraordinary discrepancy which must have its origin with or around the *chaukidār*. An amusing example of such errors is quoted by Captain Masson—In one village, he says, a Kahār "was reported to have died of dysentery. In the *chaukidār's* book it is written that he died of fever, but the man actually died of snake-bite. A more extraordinary mixture one cannot well imagine."

Serious epidemics of small-pox are not common, and, as a rule, Small- the death-rate is very low. The worst epidemic on record occurred Pox. in 1902, when 5,000 persons, representing 3 per thousand of the population, died of the disease.

Respiratory diseases are more common than would appear Respira- from the returns, all cases of capillary bronchitis in children tory diseases, (known locally as *hawē dawē* or *gohā*), which is a very common disease at certain seasons of the year, being returned under other heads. Even so, the number of deaths caused by such diseases is greater than in other parts of the Province.

Blindness is more common than in any other district in Bengal Infirmitie. or Eastern Bengal, no less than 187 males out of every 100,000 males and 194 out of the same number of females being returned as blind at the census of 1901. The glare and dust accompanying a hot dry climate appear to predispose to cataract; in the five years ending in 1900, 886 successful operations for cataract were performed. Insanity is also more frequent than in any other part of South Bihār, 38 males and 12 females out of every 100,000 of either sex being returned as suffering from insanity; excluding the inmates of the lunatic asylum at Bankipore, the figures are 15 and 7 respectively. Lepers are also more numerous than elsewhere in Bihār, 77 out of every 100,000 males being shown as lepers at the census of 1901. Popular belief in this district coincides with recent theories in considering that leprosy may be produced by a fish diet.

The introduction of sanitary reforms in rural areas is a matter of great difficulty. Though strict in attending to their personal SANITA- cleanliness, the villagers live in complete indifference to their TION. unhealthy surroundings, and the sense of public cleanliness is wanting. The village site is generally dirty, crowded with cattle, and badly drained. The houses themselves are dark, ill-ventilated huts, built of mud dug out of some hole in the immediate vicinity, which becomes a stagnant filthy pool, the receptacle of all kinds

of dirt. The wells are not properly protected, and the drainage of the houses is apt to find its way into them; while the tanks are used indiscriminately for cooking and bathing. In spite, however, of the apathy of the people and the tenacity with which they cling to customs injurious to health, many sanitary reforms have been effected by the Local Boards, which in this respect serve as models to the rest of the Province. Systematic operations have been taken in hand to keep the larger villages in a sanitary condition by filling up unhealthy hollows, clearing away rank vegetation, and removing filth; and sweepers are employed in the larger villages under the control of a village headman or respectable resident.

In the towns the problem of sanitation is more difficult owing to the congested area which has to be dealt with. The houses are closely packed together along the main streets and in narrow side lanes; the better class of houses are built with little attempt to secure ventilation; while the majority are made of mud, built on a slightly raised floor and overcrowded with inmates. The Municipal Act gives the authorities power to deal with matters connected with the water-supply, drainage, street cleaning, sewage, etc.; and great improvements have been effected since its introduction in 1884. But the time has been too short to introduce all the reforms required, and the funds at the disposal of the municipalities are too limited to enable them to execute any large schemes, which would completely remedy the insanitary conditions produced by many centuries of neglect. All, moreover, have been severely handicapped of late years by the plague epidemic, which has crippled their resources. At present, the crying want in all the municipal areas is a proper scheme of drainage and water-supply.

VACCINATION.

Vaccination, which is compulsory only in municipal areas, appears to be regarded with some disfavour by the people. In 1905-06 the number of persons successfully vaccinated was 39,000 representing 21 per mille of the population—the lowest proportion in the whole of Bengal—and protection was afforded to 347 per thousand of infants under one year of age. The annual number of successful operations in the preceding 5 years averaged 23·1 per mille of the population, a figure lower than in any other district except Shahabād and Sāran, as compared with the average of 26·7 per mille for the Patna Division, and 31·1 per mille for the whole Province. Apart from the general unpopularity of vaccination, there seems little doubt that the prevalence of plague has seriously interfered with the progress of the operations.

Thirty years ago there were only 5 dispensaries in the district situated at Patna, Bankipore, Bârh, Bihâr and Dinapore. There is now a General Hospital at Bankipore and 15 dispensaries at the following places:—Patna, Badalpurâ, Bârh, Bharatpurâ, Bihâr, Chândi, Dinapore, Islâmpur, Karaiparsarâ, Khusrupur, Maner, Massaurhi, Mokâmeh, Pûnpûn and Râjgîr. The General Hospital at Bankipore contains 124 beds for male and 20 beds for female patients; the Patna city dispensary contains beds for 30 male and 12 female patients; the dispensary at Dinapore for 19 male and 6 female patients; that at Bârh for 12 male and 6 female patients; and that at Bihâr for 16 male and 8 female patients. The other dispensaries afford out-door relief only.

MEDICAL
INSTITU-
TIONS.

The number of these institutions has increased considerably during recent years, and their popularity has grown steadily. In 1896 the Commissioner, Sir J. A. Bourdillon, K.C.S.I., remarked that "the population is so vast, compared with the number of dispensaries and that of patients, that an increase in the number of the latter is a mere atom in the great mass and can indicate no general feeling. Many years must elapse before the people of Bihâr will flock so freely to the dispensaries as they do in the North-Western Provinces." The statistics of attendance show, however, that the popularity of the English method of treatment has been steadily growing, the number of patients treated annually rising from 119,000 in 1895 to 160,000 in 1905 or by 34 per cent. in 10 years; the daily average number of patients in the same 2 years was 1,207 and 1,479 respectively.

Among other medical institutions may be mentioned the Lunatic Asylum at Bankipore, which has accommodation for 206 males and 56 females; the Temple Medical School at Patna, which will be described in Chapter XV; and the Duchess of Teek Hospital in the same city. This hospital is maintained by the Zanâna Bible and Medical Mission, which does much useful work among the women in Patna. It has a strong staff of lady doctors and nurses, and consists of 4 buildings erected in 1893-95, viz., a block containing out-patients and consulting rooms, compounders' room, store room, operating theatre and ward attaching; a separate ward block containing private wards arranged on the cottage hospital system; nurses' and matrons' quarters; and a lady doctor's house containing a private ward and consulting room. These buildings are situated not far from the river bank, on a plot of high ground, three quarters of a mile to the west of the Opium Factory in Patna.

The following tables contain statistics of the principal diseases treated and operations performed at each of the hospitals and

dispensaries under Government control, as well as of their receipts and expenditure, during 1906.

NAME OF DISPENSARY.	DISEASES TREATED.					Number of surgical operations performed.
	Malarial fevers.	Diseases of the eye.	Diseases of the ear.	Worms.	Dysentery.	
Bankipore General Hospital.	3,080	3,046	3,253	1,227	308	3,651
Badalpur Dispensary.	1,028	272	561	329	217	408
Bārhi Dispensary	758	447	1,193	839	169	552
Bharatpur "	1,200	116	609	205	150	224
Bihār "	2,030	1,815	2,322	800	571	950
Chāndī "	1,784	327	486	125	342	527
Dinapore "	2,446	604	1,415	539	173	1,107
Islāmpur "	1,367	309	249	110	198	219
Karāiparsarai "	2,304	410	524	432	549	329
Khusarupur "	2,161	637	840	243	271	266
Maner "	1,607	218	455	276	129	268
Masaurhi "	1,921	406	540	444	533	295
Mokāmeh "	659	159	464	276	110	274
Patna city "	1,096	2,039	1,652	461	215	1,701
Ponpōn "	982	280	518	134	149	265
Rājgir "	2,226	372	248	108	366	246
Total ...	26,069	11,611	15,520	6,581	4,431	10,195

NAME OF DISPENSARY.	RECEIPTS.				EXPENDITURE.	
	Government contribution.	District Funds.	Municipal Funds.	Subscriptions and other sources.	Establishment.	Medicines, diet, buildings, etc.
Bankipore General Hospital.	Rs. 10,642	Rs. 6,000	Rs. 5,965	Rs. 9,906	Rs. 7,184	Rs. 18,510
Badalpur Dispensary.	0	1,332	...	41	640	790
Bārhi Dispensary	0	600	900	172	600	1,287
Bharatpur "	20	1,101	...	156	567	749
Bihār "	320	500	5,421	1,101	2,513	2,525
Chāndī "	10	1,037	...	3	564	468
Dinapore "	1,946	500	2,000	5,064	1,809	1,877
Islāmpur "	21	5,143	...	61	536	4,628
Karāiparsarai "	25	1,232	...	75	601	860
Khusarupur "	19	1,124	...	26	609	582
Maner "	16	1,157	540	733
Masaurhi "	24	933	...	21	645	354
Mokāmeh "	16	1,614	...	52	653	434
Patna City "	33	...	5,659	626	3,206	2,577
Ponpōn "	19	320	...	18	537	430
Rājgir "	21	1,061	...	180	613	751
Total ...	13,138	23,804	17,345	18,371	21,986	37,942

CHAPTER VI.

AGRICULTURE.

THE district may be divided into 4 broadly marked tracts, of which the first three are comprised within the Bankipore, Bārāh and Dinapore subdivisions, while the fourth consists of the Bihār subdivision. These areas are, (1) the *diāra* lands along the Ganges; (2) a long narrow strip of high land along the Ganges; (3) a broad belt of low-lying country south of the upland strip just mentioned; and (4) the Bihār subdivision. In each of these tracts agricultural conditions vary considerably, and a brief account will therefore be given of each.

The *diāra* lands, which are found in the bed of the Ganges, stretch along the whole of the north of the district. The creation of these *diāras*, or *chars* as they are also called, is an interesting example of soil formation. Some back-water or curve of the river bed sets up an eddy in the current, which thereupon becomes sufficiently stationary to deposit a portion of the sand which it holds in solution. The level of the *char*, which is so far nothing but a heap of sand, then gradually rises as the water lying stagnant spreads a thin layer of clay and silt over the sand; and this deposit of silt deepens at every high flood, until at last the *char* rises above flood-level. The soil of such a *char* is extremely fertile, and grows magnificent crops; but if its growth is arrested by the river altering its course, so that the flood-water does not cover it during the second stage of its formation, it remains sandy and barren. These *diāra* lands are the most fertile in the district; they grow *bhadai* crops before the river rises and *rabi* crops in the cold weather, both yielding magnificent harvests.

The second tract is situated between the permanent bank of the Ganges and the low-lying tract to the south, and comprises all the land lying north of the East Indian Railway line throughout the breadth of the district, with the exception of a small area in the extreme north-west which is liable to inundation in the rains. In this tract *bhadai* and *rabi* crops are chiefly grown, though rice is also cultivated in some places, especially in the neighbourhood of the Patna-Gaya Canal between Khagaul and Dinapore.

The third tract comprises the remainder of the Dinapore, Bankipore and Bārāh subdivisions and may be further subdivided

into 3 separate areas. The western portion receives artificial irrigation from the canal running for about 40 miles near the western border of the district, which supplies the whole of the Bikram thāna and parts of the Maner, Dinapore, Phulwāri, and Masaurhi thānas. Further to the west the country is intersected by the Pūnpūn and its affluents the Morhar and Dardhā. These rivers are largely used for irrigation, but when the Ganges rises, their waters are forced back and the land is flooded. The third area consists of nearly the whole of the Bārhi subdivision and extends from the extreme east of the district to the south of Patna city. The lands comprised in this belt of country, which are known as *tāl* lands, are subject to annual inundation from the Pūnpūn and other rivers, which meander from west to east on their way to the Ganges. To the east, however, part of the Mokāmeh thāna is served by irrigation works of the same kind as those constructed in the Bihār subdivision. The whole of this tract produces a comparatively small crop of *bhadoi* and rice, but usually yields a good *rabi* harvest.

Bihār sub-
division.

The Bihār subdivision is divided into the hills in the south and the low country to the north. The whole subdivision is intersected by streams, which in the hot and cold weather contain little or no water, but at the time of heavy rain are filled from bank to bank. The greater part is provided with a system of irrigation works intended to store and distribute the water. Reservoirs called *ahars* are built, some of which are filled with rain-water and natural drainage, while others are replenished by damming the rivers. A number of artificial channels or *pains* convey the water from the rivers to the reservoirs, and other small channels conduct it to the fields of the cultivators. These irrigation works effectually protect the greater part of the subdivision from any general failure of the crops by drought, but there are two exceptions to the general rule, viz., the Islāmpur thāna (116 square miles) in the extreme south-west and the south-east corner of the Bihār thāna. The former thāna contains few irrigation works, and the Phalgu river, which traverses this area, has silted up. The land is mostly high and sandy, while some of it consists of sterile soil, impregnated with carbonate of soda. *Bhadoi* crops are not grown very extensively, and the land is not altogether suitable for rice cultivation, which has only been introduced of comparatively recent years. In the latter tract, which is comprised within the Asthāwān outpost, conditions are very similar, for this area has also lost the means of irrigation which it formerly possessed, owing to the silting up of its river channels.

Generally speaking, 4 classes of soils are recognized, viz., (1) *Soils.* *kewāl*, which contains about 70 per cent of clay; (2) *doras*, which is half clay and half sand; (3) *balsundri*, in which sand preponderates over clay; and (4) *diāra* land, which may be either *doras* or *balsundri* (usually the latter), but which is enriched every year by a deposit of silt. Besides these, there is in some places a white soil called *rehā*, which is rendered more or less sterile by being impregnated with carbonate of soda (*reh*); when the impregnation is so great as to render it unculturable waste, it is known as *āsar*.

Kewāl soil, which is a species of hard stiff clay, opening out when dry in gaping fissures, is cultivated with rice; but it is also suitable for *rabi* crops, as it retains moisture for a long period and *rabi* has to depend, to a great extent, on sub-soil moisture. One variety of *kewāl* in the Bārā subdivision, known as *tāl* land, is too deeply submerged during the rains to grow rice, the main product of this soil elsewhere at that season, but yields splendid *rabi* crops.

Doras soil, when low-lying, produces rice and *rabi* crops; while *bhadoi* and *rabi* crops, such as maize and *arhar*, are raised on it, if it is in the uplands. The richest *doras* soil consists of what is known as the *bhith* or *dih* land, i.e., the belt near the village homesteads, which is better manured and more carefully cultivated than land at a distance. Here well irrigation is largely practised, and the most valuable crops, such as poppy, potatoes and vegetables, are grown extensively.

Balsundri soil is a sandy loam, which grows *bhadoi* and *rabi* crops, such as *marua* and barley; and the same crops are raised on *diāra* lands, but the favourite crop in the latter is the castor-oil plant.

For the *bhadoi* and late rice harvests the distribution most favourable to agriculture—the husbandman's ideal year—is when premonitory showers, falling in May or early in June, facilitate that spade husbandry which, to secure a really good crop, must precede ploughing operations. The rain in the end of June and in July should be heavy: then should come an interval of comparatively fair weather, in which weeding operations may be successfully prosecuted. The September rains must be heavy, shading off into fine weather with October showers. On the sufficiency of the September rains, more than of any other month, depends the character of the winter rice crop. Finally, periodic showers from December to February inclusive are essential to a good *rabi* harvest.*

* A. P. MacDonnell, *Food-grain supply of Bihār and Bengal*, Calcutta, 1876.